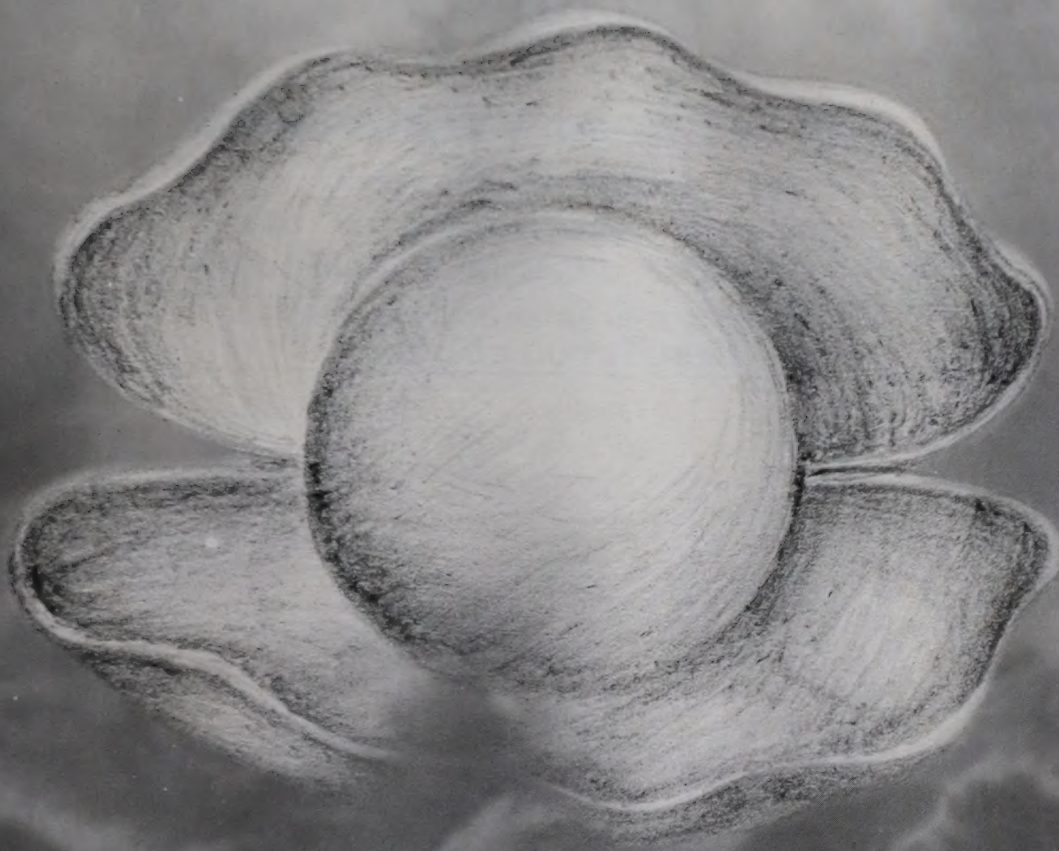


# RIOTS



PSYCHOSOCIAL CARE  
*for*  
CHILDREN



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# RIOTS

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INFORMATION MANUAL 3

## **RIOTS**

PSYCHOSOCIAL CARE *for* CHILDREN

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Note: The names of all the Children have been changed to protect the identity

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Dedicated to  
the Children of  
the 2002 Gujarat Riots



# PREFACE

Gujarat Riots of March 2002 represents one of the most brutal events in the history of Independent India. The specific features of extreme violence, focus on women and children and destruction of property and personal violations, along with lack of protection from the state machinery are recognised as major departures from other communal riots. The impact of riots on the people, in general and children in particular, have been described graphically as 'trauma haunts children', 'children live in terror', 'Gujarat's children of terror' and so on in some of the media headlines.

The impact on children has greater significance as their normal development is interrupted by the riots. In addition, a whole generation of children will grow up with a distorted view of relationships with communities and this is not desirable from individual and community viewpoints. It is for these reasons that the interventions to minimise the psychological effects is an important aspect of relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and reconciliation.

All disasters pose a monumental challenge to the total community. Everyone who is exposed to disaster experiences disruption in their lives to varying degrees. Among the survivors, the most affected are people whose lives are disrupted more severely by the disaster. This includes those who have lost their homes, experienced violence, lost their family members and community.

For too long, psychosocial consequences have been neglected as part of relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction. In India, starting with the Bhopal disaster in 1984, there has been a gradual acceptance of the need for psychosocial care. Long-term studies of psychological problems of disaster were studied in the Bhopal population as well as the survivors of the Marathwada earthquake. Both of them showed that there were higher emotional illnesses even 5 years after the disaster.

For the first time, following the Orissa super cyclone a programme of psychosocial care with community-level workers (Snehakarmis) was implemented. This intervention has demonstrated the nature of the needs of the vulnerable groups, the possibility of community-level workers to provide care and the effectiveness of such care. In a way, the Orissa experience established a new approach to psychosocial care.

Every disaster is similar and yet different in a number of ways. The riots of Gujarat and what it means for the survivors and the providing of psychosocial care to children is the scope of this manual which differs from earlier efforts. The approaches outlined are totally based on extensive field work – the initial experiences of the Aman Pathiks in providing care and the observations of the mental health professionals in providing support and supervision.

The rebuilding of people, reconstruction not only of shelters and livelihoods, but also the Human Spirit is a challenge. This manual works towards that goal. This manual is suitable for use by all categories of people working with children like school teachers, health workers, Anganwadi workers, volunteers and parents.

We sincerely appreciate the contributions of all authors. We also thank the Aman Pathiks, the Aman Samuday team and the children of Gujarat, for their valuable contribution.

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*The Authors*  
2002



## BACKGROUND

The state of Gujarat was torn apart by sectarian violence. This has convulsed Gujarat since 27 February 2002 and left a trail of profound human tragedy. About 97,162 people were said to be affected, of whom 1,243 lost their lives, 3,583 were injured and 179 were documented as missing. Houses and commercial establishments were looted, destroyed and charred to the ground. Thousands of people were rendered homeless across the state, resulting in mass displacement of people and destruction of livelihoods.



In the immediate aftermath of the violence, there were at least 1,00,000 women, children and men in the 103 relief camps in Ahmedabad. An estimated 50,000 people were in similar such camps across the state in Gujarat. Having lost everything they once had, people lived as internal refugees in their own county. The media has depicted very clearly that even after three months of their world being devastated, survivors lived in makeshift camps in schools, *darghas* or graveyards. Statements like 'The monumental pain, loss, betrayal and injustice suffered during the riots', 'The depth of anger and longing for revenge', 'The wounds may not heal for generations' and 'The trauma haunts children', in the media document the intensity of the psychological scar in the minds of the survivors.



In this riot the attacks targeted women and children. Children have been subjected to rape, mutilation, murder and burning or witnessed it happening to friends, family and neighbours. Post-event arrests have seen adolescents and children being subjected to custodial injustice. Lastly, there are problems relating to the educational system prevailing in the state. Children are either being denied access into school or the process of re-entry is made so difficult that children prefer to change their school or drop out of school. All these are leaving them traumatised and scarred while disrupting the sense of well-being among children.



Disasters are abnormal experiences and cause distress and emotional reactions in almost all people. Children often do not speak of their feelings and reactions. At times they are unable to comprehend what is happening to them and why they behave the way they do – like crying, running around aimlessly, feeling sad and unwanted.

Childhood is a period of growth and development. It has been seen that the developing years are critical as these years lay the foundation for development into a well-adjusted adult. At each stage of development there are certain tasks which the child must get opportunities to master for healthy, emotional and personality development. Relevant and continuous interactions with caregivers, as well as their environment, enable the children to master these tasks and move on to the next phase of development. E H Erikson (1964) highlighted the important role environmental factors play in the normal development of the child and how lack of opportunities to adequately master the developmental tasks can lead to dysfunctional behaviour.

For instance, a child during babyhood must have caregivers who meet the basic needs of the child. Through this the child develops a sense of security and trust or else the child will not feel secure and will develop a general feeling of mistrust about people around him/her. As the child grows up, he/she needs an environment which can be explored to enable the development of self-reliance and doing things on his/her own. When the child starts going to school he/she makes friends and interacts with peers and learns from them. All this is possible in an environment when the child has caring caregivers who give quality time to the child, a home where the child feels secure, has a regular attendance in school and has playmates in the neighbourhood to interact with.

A disaster disrupts the process of interaction the child has with his/her environment. It leads to a displaced lifestyle wherein the familiar environment (home, school, peers, etc.,) is lost. There is a sense of panic and confusion and the caregivers are unable to care for the child or are not around and for some time regular life patterns are disrupted.



Disasters hamper the process of healthy emotional and psychological development.

Children feel safe and secure if they have consistent and predictable routines in life. Caregivers who are caring and responsive help them be happy. Disasters disrupt this sense of well-being by destroying normal predictable and consistent life routines of children. Caregivers, during such times, are also unable to give the care and comfort they would have been providing during normal life. This causes anxiety, fear, and a great sense of insecurity among children. Their worries and fears manifest through a



large amount of reactions like clinging behaviour, refusal to attend school, bodily aches and pains, fear, palpitation, aggression, irritability and sleep problems.

In order to help them recover their sense of well-being, an attempt to normalise their daily life routines and their emotional reactions is essential. Children need to feel safe and secure both physically and emotionally. It is important that children are given opportunities to express themselves in a safe and accepting environment.

This manual attempts to enable caregivers (parents, teachers and other adults) to:

- Understand the **impact of riots** on children
- Understand the **emotional reactions** children would be experiencing as a result of the trauma
- Understand how **recovery** can be facilitated in children
- Understand the **needs of children** who may require additional care to recover.

All these efforts will enable the children to overcome the trauma they have been through and re-establish their sense of well-being and good health.

Case studies included in the manual as examples have been drawn from various sources. Training was given to enable Community Level Helpers (CLHs) to work intensively with the children. These CLHs are referred to as 'Amanpathiks' in this document.



# IMPACT OF THE EVENTS ON CHILDREN

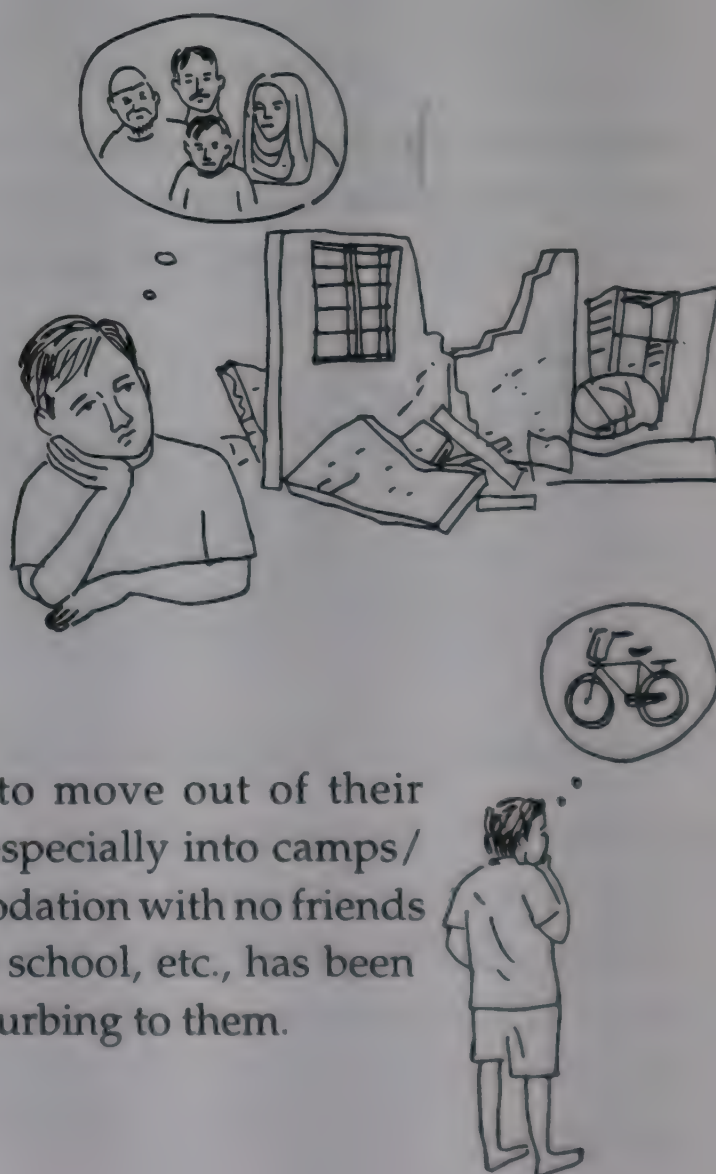
It is well-known that children are most vulnerable to the negative effects of a traumatic event. Due to lack of experience and maturity, children are unable to fully comprehend what has happened. The reactions of adults around them, the kind of loss they have experienced and the amount of exposure to trauma determine the effect the event will have on the child.

The riots in Gujarat have had far-reaching effects on children because they have either experienced the trauma and suffering themselves or have witnessed it happening to their near and dear ones. Given below are some of the kinds of trauma that children experienced during the riots.

## LOSS OF FAMILIAR ENVIRONMENTS

One of the key factors that provides children a sense of security is an environment they are familiar with and comfortable in. Their home, school, neighbourhood and religious places afford this security. Added to this are their personal belongings, pets and other household animals. During the recent riots, many children lost their homes and their personal belongings. They were no time to save anything. These losses have left the children stunned. They now miss their pets, their dolls, cycles, which they used to play with and they keep looking for

them. Having to move out of their surroundings, especially into camps/ rented accommodation with no friends or not going to school, etc., has been profoundly disturbing to them.





### **\*\*\*11-year-old boy**

*I was having lunch when we were attacked. There was a huge crowd with swords, knives and stones. I ran out of the house with my parents. They grabbed my father and beat him up. They began hitting my mother too. I also got hit on the foot. One Rapid Action Force man held a gun to my chest and told me to shut up. I thought that I was going to die. Then the military arrived and the situation improved. By nightfall, we came to this camp. In my locality I had a lot of Hindu friends. We used to play cricket and basketball together. But after these problems started, they began chasing me away and saying that they didn't want to play with a mussalman. They are not my friends anymore. I don't want to go back there again.*

### **\*\*\*14-year-old boy**

*I was reading namaaz when we were attacked. The armed mob first began throwing petrol bombs. They had been gathering at the Mahakali Mandir in our locality. Instead of controlling them, the police started shooting in our direction. The crowd burnt the masjid and also a copy of the Koran. I ran towards my house but the crowds had already burnt and looted it. This camp is not safe either. We are still being attacked and the police come and throw teargas shells inside. I would like to ask them, 'Are we the attackers?' The other day, one woman in the camp died of shock after a bomb went off near the camp. I want to go back home but the situation outside is still not safe.*

### **\*12-year-old boy**

Riots have left a deep impact on him. He does not have food as before; he starts crying when you ask about his parents or the riots. He gets frightened on seeing a crowd. He hardly replies. When asked about his studies, he replied, *I would like to continue my studies but don't want to return to the place where I was living before the riots.*

### **\*\*7-year-old boy**

He is not interested in anything. He sits listlessly. Remains unresponsive. Crayons, food, drawing sheets, conversation – nothing moves him. He has witnessed the killings of his aunt, her children being stoned and then hacked to death. Now he wakes up at night and shouts *Run. Run.* He is disoriented and asks, *Is this our house?*

### **\*\*5-year-old boy**

*I will kill them. I will kill those who burnt my house. We used to repair their fans for free and they looted 700 fans from our family. Our neighbours killed my cat too. I loved my cat. They used to hate it. They threw it down from the balcony and then threw a brick on it and killed it.*





## **S** TRUGGLE FOR FOOD, SHELTER AND OTHER AMENITIES

The shift to the camps brought in problems of having to settle down in a place with very few amenities. They had to stay in camps for a long period of time with no indication of when they could return home. The camp did not afford the survivors privacy, sanitation and living they were used to in their homes. However, they had to cope with the impact of the event and the trauma.

### **\*9-year-old boy**

*Here they do not even give good tea; it is only water.*

### **\*11-year-old girl**

*The chappatis are so hard and the flour is full of insects. I am not able to eat.*

### **\*9-year-old boy**

*I really miss my toys here. My friends are back in my old school. Here I have no friends.*

The whole atmosphere was fear laden and the repeated gory details of the riots by the adults have become imprinted in the minds of the children. The result is that some of the older children in the age group of 11–15 even detail the entire event as if they personally witnessed it. They repeat all the details in a matter-of-fact manner.

### **\*12-year-old boy who watched a lady being burnt**

*I saw a woman who was tall and well built. The tolawalas (troublemakers) were finding it difficult to burn her, so they added more chemical and then burnt her (Woh unchi thi na jal nahin rahi the, is liye aur powder dalna pada.)*

He spoke almost as if he was talking about cooking or doing some mundane activity rather than the brutal burning of a grandmother who had not had time to escape and was burnt along with two grandchildren.

Pointing to the empty field at Naroda where some people had taken shelter and were dragged out mercilessly and killed, he added,

*There are ghosts there. In the night I hear shouts of 'Save me'. Earlier, we used to play here but now we feel scared to come here alone. When asked whether there were other times he felt scared, his answer was, Yes. At night where do we get sleep, sometimes we have to take the name of God and then close our eyes and sleep comes or at times we keep lying awake the whole night. (Neend kahan aati hai? Bismila karke aankh band karke let jate hain. Kabhi kabhi lete rahetein hain par ankhein khuli rahenti hain.)*

This 12-year-old talked of what happened in Godhra and asked questions like, *If the train was burnt down in Godhra, what did we do here to now be punished like this? (wahan Godhra mein train jalaya to humne kya kiya tha hame kyon mara.)* These were just



stated in a matter-of-fact manner. At times the child in him emerged while talking of sleeplessness, the fear at night and being close to the area of the event. He also had the fear of going back to school although he missed attending school. However, he had started going to pray at the Noorani Masjid, which had just got its loud speaker fitted once again.

The case of this 12-year-old boy was not unique. Several were the children in the camps in the age group of 11–18 years who experienced similar emotional disturbance.

## **C**ONTINUED THREAT TO THEIR SENSE OF WELL-BEING

Once the camps have been closed down and people have started returning home, recovery is being hampered. People have either shifted to new localities where families have to re-establish their relationships or have to go back to areas where they feel very threatened. The children have had to leave schools where they had been going to and now have to settle down in new schools or even drop out of schooling altogether.

### **\*\*13-year-old boy**

*Our houses were burnt down but we all escaped unhurt. Many of our neighbours participated in the attack but not our immediate ones. They saved us. No, I never want to go back to that neighbourhood.*

### **\*10-year-old boy**

*Now I don't want to play with them. I'm scared.*

### **\*\*7-year-old girl who lost her sister**

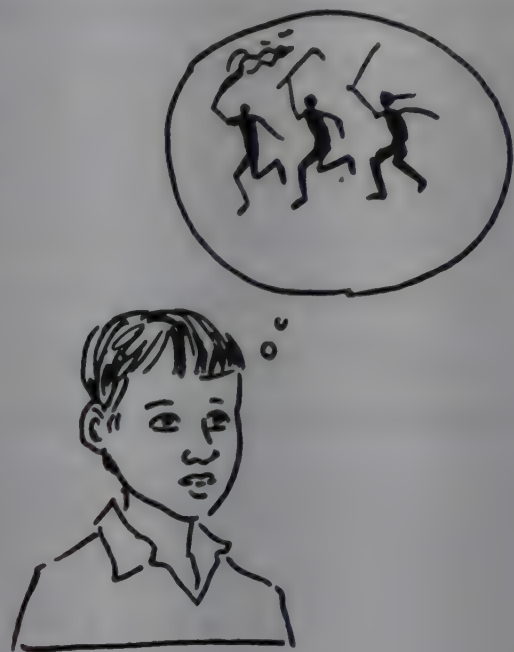
*I will never go back to my house, my sister is sleeping there. I will go to some place else with my mother.*

### **\*\*14-year-old girl who lost her buffaloes**

*Her mother said, She keeps asking for the buffaloes and crying for them. They were her friends; she loved them dearly.*

### **\*\*\*10-year-old girl**

*We were sleeping, we had not even had breakfast. Suddenly, stones were being thrown. The violent crowd closed the gate of our colony and threw burning things on us and on our houses. Many people were burnt completely. Many houses were also burnt down. The attackers kept shouting abuses. We saw the houses burning; we saw people dying a horrible death. The mob stood near the gate so that nobody could escape. The police was also there. They used tear*



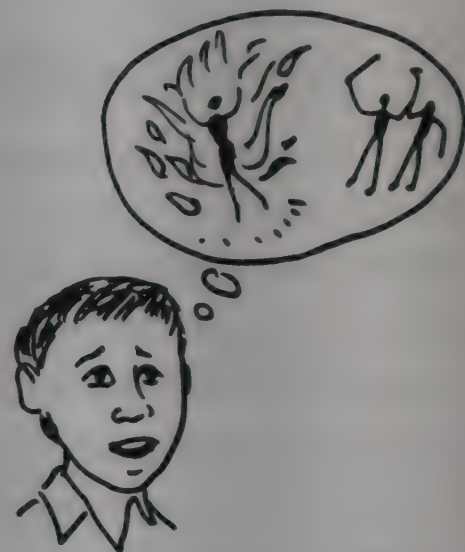


gas so there was smoke everywhere. We called the police station but they didn't come to our rescue. I have nightmares about Hindus frightening me not to return to the area, otherwise they will kill all of us.

She does not eat and hardly sleeps. Sometimes she becomes unconscious. She is scared of crowds and noise and has a great fear of darkness.

## **F**EAR AND INSECURITY

The attacks happened at a time when people were totally unprepared. There was a lot of panic and anxiety when people fled to save their lives. They were also unable to run to safety as family units. Often the children were left behind to fend for themselves. The children say the elders tried to escape but could not catch up in the frenzy. But what they also witnessed and could not understand was why their parents and loved ones were being assaulted or killed. They witnessed attacks on their near and dear ones as well as destruction of their property.



Currently, these children appear to be happy and continuing with their daily life routines. But interaction with them reveals that they suffer from sleeping problems, experience fears and prefer not to return to their earlier neighbourhood where the horrific event took place. A sense of fear, anxiety and insecurity is prevalent among the children.

### **\*10-year-old girl**

She witnessed the mob running wild with weapons, burning houses, looting everything, and people screaming and running everywhere. This girl suffered from fever for 10 days and treatment is still going on. She does not dare go outside the camp alone. She hardly eats or speaks. Loud noise and crowds frighten her and her sleep is disturbed. She suddenly wakes up scared during the night. When asked if she wants to study, she replied, *Yes, but in Karnataka.* (one of the states in South India).

### **\*8-year-old girl**

Her house was looted and they burned it down on 28 Feb. In these riots she lost her brother, mother and sister. On being asked about the recent communal riots, she starts crying recollecting her lost family members. Even after 2 months treatment she has to continue taking medicines regularly. She gets scared of any noise and crowd. She is scared to go outside the camp. She demands answers to questions like, *Why were my mother, brother and sister killed? When will I get my mother back?*



### **\*\*\*8-year-old boy**

*I can't sleep. If I do fall asleep, I wake up screaming. I can't eat. I remember my mother and my brothers and sisters: Hussain, Khajjo, Afreen, Shaheen. I feel scared to close my eyes. What if Keshubhai and Guddu Chharra come and get me? They know that I saw them and they will hunt me down. When there are too many people, I start feeling nervous.*

### **\*\*\*8-year-old boy**

*I want to grow up and track them down. I want to go and burn their houses like they burnt our house. I want to cut them with swords the way they cut my family. I want to become stronger and take revenge. I cannot live with Hindus now. I will not feel safe.*

## **WITNESSING DEATH AND OTHER FORMS OF VIOLENCE**

The brutality of the killings has been internalised in the minds of children. They have sometimes witnessed the events themselves. Others have heard it with all the gory details so many times over that it almost seems as if they have personally lived through the event.

### **\*\*12-year-old boy**

*My parents and I were washing our clothes across the street at a neighbour's house. I saw from there how the tola poured petrol over my dadi (granny) and badi amma (aunt) and burnt them. My aunt was screaming, "Save me, save me", but we could not save her. We hid in that empty house for three days. At night, the tola came back and ransacked our house. I was shocked to see that many of our Hindu neighbours who had celebrated Id with us two days ago had joined the tola. They came back for three days continuously and dragged my aunt's and dadi's body out and burnt them over and over again; they wanted to leave no trace of the bodies.*

### **\*\*16-year-old boy**

*I was sleeping when the police came and stormed into the house, breaking down the door. They beat me very badly. They dragged me outside and beat me again with sticks. They took me to the police station and locked me up for 8 days, gave me food only once a day and continued to beat me. I missed my exams as a result of that.*

### **\*\*15-year-old girl**

*My 17-year-old brother was studying in my aunt's house when the police came and arrested him. They beat him up mercilessly until he collapsed and then dragged him. What wrong did he do? My brother says it is better to die than to live a life like this.*

### **\*11-year-old boy**

*The Hindus attacked us and destroyed everything. The crowd burnt down the houses of my uncles as well as our home. They threw stones at us. They were armed and killed many*



Muslims. I would like to become a terrorist rather than study. I will kill all the Hindus because Hindus already see me as a terrorist.

He is furious as a result of witnessing the violent incidents of riots. He gets dreams about riots. He is injured slightly.

### **\*\*\*14-year-old boy**

*I was playing cricket with friends when the police came. They told the Hindu boys to go home. They were warning them that something was going to happen. Around 9 a.m. a mob of 15,000–20,000 people arrived and surrounded our building. They started throwing stones and petrol bombs. Everyone began running helter-skelter when the fire started. I ran up to the roof and hid there.*

*Ehsan Jaffrey was well known and everyone thought they would be safe with him. So many people hid in his house. I was peeping from a window at the top when I saw him on the ground floor. He was telling the mob, 'Kill me if you want but let the people go.' They put a burning tyre around his neck and pushed a sword through his stomach. I turned my head. I couldn't watch anymore. I keep having nightmares about it. I can't sleep. Sometimes I think I'm sleeping but I wake up crying. I hate these people. Why did they do this to us? I saw our neighbours in the crowd. I want to kill them if I can. I want to go back there and kill them.*

### **\*\*\*12-year-old boy**

*My father was almost blind and could not run. At first they threw stones at him, then they slashed his head with a sword. They killed my mother and sister too, like that. They had looted our belongings, they had raped my mother and sister. I did not utter a word. I lost consciousness twice. They poured petrol or kerosene and burnt all the bodies. They started burning down the houses.*

## **WITNESSING RAPES**

In a culture where gender divisions were very strictly marked, today children are openly talking about the sexual assault on women in very crude, frank words. This shows the kind of brutality they have witnessed. Sexual assault is no longer something which parents and adults are able to shield from their children.



### **\*\*10-year-old boy**

*The mob stripped everyone naked and beat them mercilessly. Then they caught everyone and cut them up with swords. When they were trying to rape my mother, one of my brothers tried*



*to intervene and he was killed. I shut my brother's mouth as he screamed. We were hiding. A thorn pricked my sister and she cried. I took the thorn out and asked her not to cry. Then one by one they killed all my ten family members and cut them up, and then burnt them up like they do in cremation grounds.*

***\*\*8-year-old boy***

*When the tola came, then my mother pushed into my hand the Rs60 she had and asked me to run. I ran but then I saw men get hold of women. I could not run anymore; I hid... and then they stripped my mother naked (usko nanga kar!).*

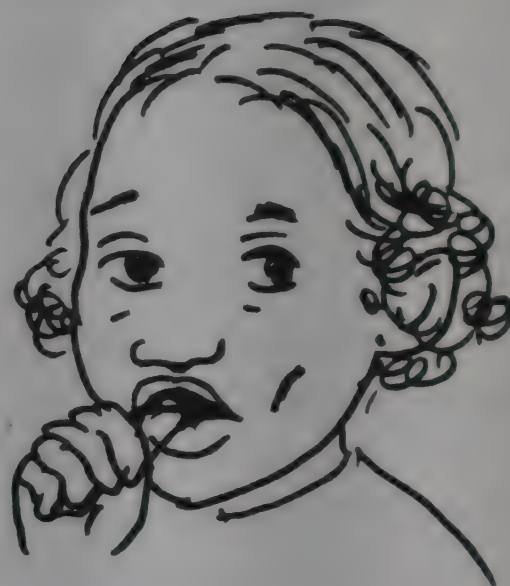
*Then this boy hides his face in his arm. He witnessed the assault on his mother. He regularly weeps in his sleep and says, I will kill them if I see them. I was scared then but I recognise them. They are from the nearby villages and I remember their faces.*

As can be seen from what the children have said, the losses are compounded by the fact that they have witnessed very brutal killings. They are unable to normalise their lives. There is still a sense of fear prevalent and the children are trying in their own way to deal with it. It is important to understand how children, according to their developmental levels and maturity, are able to process these losses. This understanding would enable you to provide them support and care that would help them recover from their experiences.



# UNDERSTANDING EMOTIONAL REACTIONS

It is important that we understand how children who have experienced riots would be processing the information gathered and what sort of reactions they show as a result. Since children have limited capacities to process information, their sense of what happened is often not realistic and they are unable to comprehend the totality of the situation. Often adults overlook the need to respond to this need of the child and explain away things to him/her. But the fact is that children are the most badly affected population in any disaster and need extra care and comfort. If you fail to address their fears and insecurities, the internal turmoil and pain can leave them sad, confused and frightened for a long time to come.



## Child's view of death at various developmental stages

### Infant

- No comprehension but senses something has happened
- Recognises that people around him/her are unhappy, sad or worried and hence becomes afraid
- May change eating, sleeping and toilet habits.

### Pre-school

- Death brings confusion and guilt. Views illness and death as punishment for some personal wrongdoing
- May view death as something that people wake up from and is reversible
- Recognises people around are unhappy, sad, worried or frightened and in turn becomes frightened
- Family is centre of his/her world and is confident that the family will take care of the needs.



### **5-9 Years**

- Often feels responsible for the events and the loss
- Begins to realise that death is final but believes it will never happen to him/her or anyone known
- Tends to personify death. May associate death with a skeleton or have nightmares.
- Unavailability of other family members to help cope is worrying
- May think about it as magical illusion or punishment
- Develops an interest in the causes of death (violence, old age, sickness)
- Has to cope with social reactions like people at school or others around.

### **9-12 Years**

- Starts recognising that death is permanent and common to anyone who is alive
- Can have somatic complaints
- May deny loss and carry on with his/her life
- Curious and interested in the gory details and asks questions
- Starts an interest in biological factors of death
- Worries about who will care for him/her. May regress to an earlier stage of development
- May feel guilty and overcomes this by attempting to be very good.

### **Adolescents**

- Has adult notions and views death as inevitable, universal, irreversible
- Tries to be independent and will feel dependent when forced to face a loss. Finds it very confusing and may have suicidal feelings
- Will question life itself and wants a lot of discussions. Needs someone to listen; to talk with
- Thinks about his/her own death which can be frightening. May withdraw and deny the loss
- May feel guilt, anger, even some responsibility for death that occurred
- Not sure how to handle own emotions in public or private, they need adult guidance.

*(Adapted from the psychosocial issues for children and families in Disasters CD HSS series, American Academy of Paediatrics)*



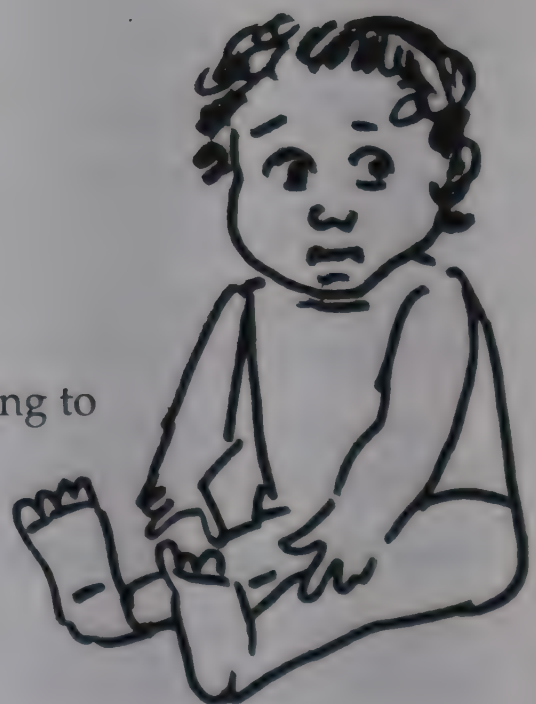
The manner in which every child processes his/her own experiences will be unique and exclusive to him/herself. The age of the child, the events he/she has been through, the amount of exposure to the event, the support and care available to him/her for recovery, will all play an important role in how the child is able to cope and deal with his/her emotional reactions. Anyone who has been through a traumatic event will show some emotional reactions. You must remember that:

- These emotional reactions are normal responses to an abnormal experience
- Reactions are common and experienced by everyone
- No one who experiences a disaster is untouched by it
- Reactions manifest differently at different periods of time after the disaster.

After a horrific incident like the riots, it is inevitable that children will indulge in acts of stealing, substance abuse, foul language. This in no way should be interpreted as reflecting the child's character. Instead it is more a reaction of the child to the pain and trauma that he/she has gone through – a response to the event the child has been unable to comprehend and cope with. If we are able to understand this, then we will be in a better position to help the child in the recovery process. These are common and normal responses to an event that is beyond the child's coping abilities, but can be dealt with and overcome. You can help the child feel more comfortable as they go through these experiences.

### **Pre-schoolers**

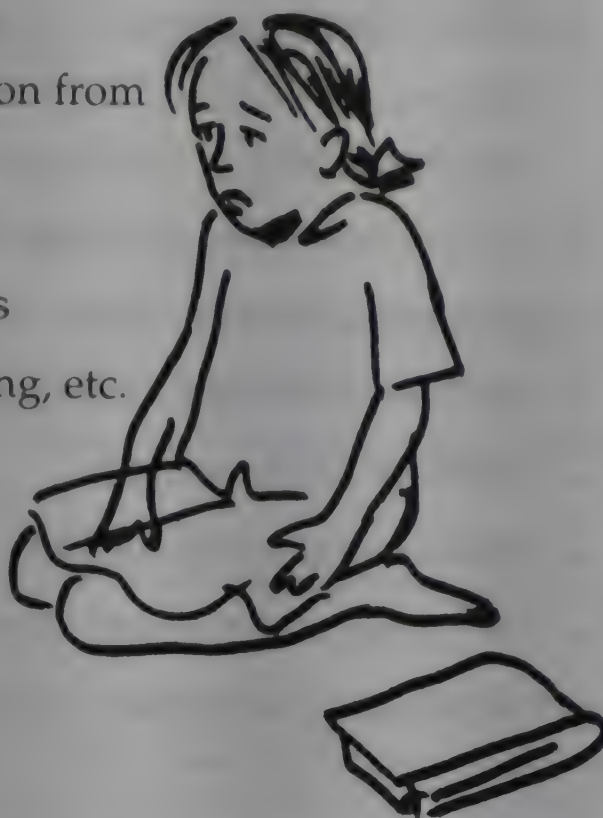
- Temper tantrums
- Crying
- Clinging and demanding
- ♦ Scary nightmares
- Helplessness
- Regressive behaviour (thumb sucking, wanting to be carried, bed-wetting)
- Moodiness, irritation
- Fear of darkness or sleeping alone
- Easily frightened and then angry
- Increased aggression, especially in boys.





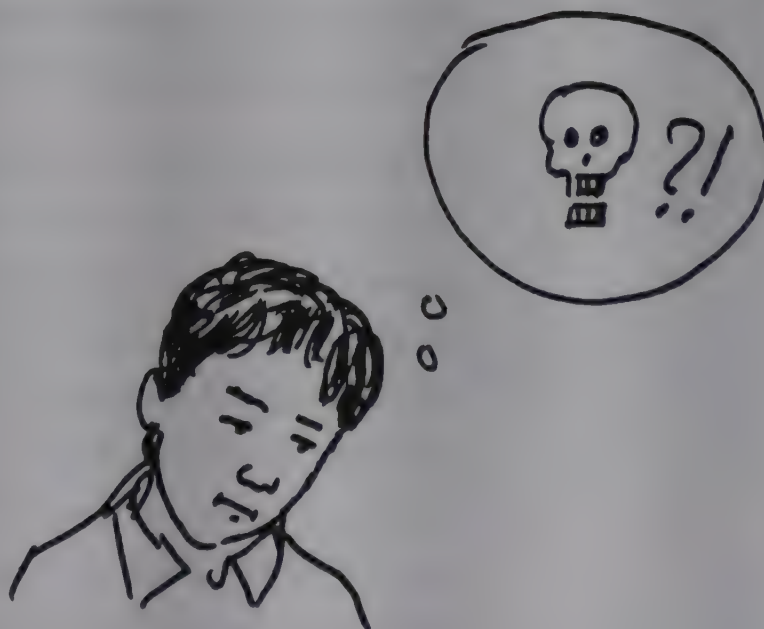
## School age

- Physical complaints – headache, stomachaches
- Aggression
- Fear of darkness/sleeping alone/separation from parents
- Lack of self-competency
- Understand loss and become very anxious
- Regression to behaviour like thumb sucking, etc.
- Nightmares and inability to sleep
- Fear of recurrence
- Difficulty in following routines
- Does not mingle with friends
- Behavioural problems
- Emotional problems like apathy, anxiety, withdrawal and depression
- Disinterest or difficulties in school work – disturbs others, worrying, remains tense, indisciplined, refusal to go to school, poor concentration
- Feel guilty and responsible for the loss.



## Adolescents

- Seeks isolation, becomes less communicative
- Sleeplessness or increased sleep
- Feel different or alienated because of their experiences
- Irritability
- Increased risk-taking behaviour
- Increase substance abuse
- Avoidance of trauma-related thoughts, feelings and activities





- Aggression – fights, destroys, argues
- Feelings of hopelessness, feeling of neglect and isolation
- Disobedience, especially towards authority and parents
- Tries to get involved in activities to get a sense of control like rescuing and organising at the camps
- Angry, frustrated and may feel very helpless
- Depression due to loss
- Guilt for not being able to do enough or for having survived
- Inability to concentrate
- Behavioural problems like aggression, lying, stealing
- Dropping out of school or work
- Aches and pains due to stress.



# HOW CAN YOU HELP CHILDREN RECOVER?

As adults in a caregiver's role (parents, relatives or members of outside agencies, teachers who have come in to help the survivors of the riots) it is imperative to understand how to help children recover. This understanding will help you to work with children and help them overcome the trauma.

Having been through these riots, the children would have experienced all or some of the following aspects of that event:

- ◆ Loss of familiar environments
- ◆ Fear and insecurity
- ◆ Struggle for food, shelter and other amenities
- ◆ Witnessed death
- ◆ Witnessing rapes and other forms of violence
- ◆ Continued threat to their sense of well-being.

All these can lead to a feeling of confusion and insecurity that results in emotional reactions as described in the previous section. At such times children turn to adults in their life whom they are close to and trust, for support and care. It is very important that you are able to provide this sense of security in their life that will help them master these reactions in a healthy manner.

When children experience some traumatic event, which they are unable to comprehend or cope with, they tend to behave in a manner not always pleasant to caregivers around. For instance, children become disruptive in class, start performing badly in school. At home they might wet the bed, use bad language, not behave well with visitors or scream and shout at family members. All these can actually make those around the child very angry and frustrated. At such times you need to remember that punishment or getting angry is not the solution. You need to understand why this is happening.





The child is unknowingly resorting to such behaviour in order to deal with the pain and suffering being experienced within them. **This is their coping mechanism; they are reaching out to you for help. They would like you to attend to them and help them cope in a more effective manner.** At such times children need extra love and reassurance. They need to be accepted along with the behaviour they are exhibiting. Irrespective of what you think of his/her behaviour, you must accept the child. Rejection or punishment will enhance their pain. **Reject the behaviour but never the child.**



Remember that these behaviours are a response to the abnormal situation they have experienced. It is their method of coping with that event. It is not a reflection of the character of the child or the fault of the caregiver. Also note that these are not permanent changes; they can be overcome. If you give enough care, time and guidance, the child can overcome these behaviours and resume normal manner of functioning. It is with this in mind that this section takes us through a framework to provide care and guidance. There are basically three things that you can do:

- ◆ **Understand the emotional reactions the child is exhibiting. This will enable you to support him/her better.**

When children face any traumatic event, they have both emotional and physical reactions. These reactions and feelings are normal responses and occur in most children who face an event that overwhelms them. Knowing this will help you understand the child better and be more caring and comforting towards the child.

- ◆ **Offer emotional support and security to the child.**

It is well-established that talking about the event and allowing the child to share his/her experiences and feelings decreases emotional stress. You need to be available for the child and create a space where the child can talk openly with you. This will rebuild his/her trust in people and help the child feel cared for and secure.

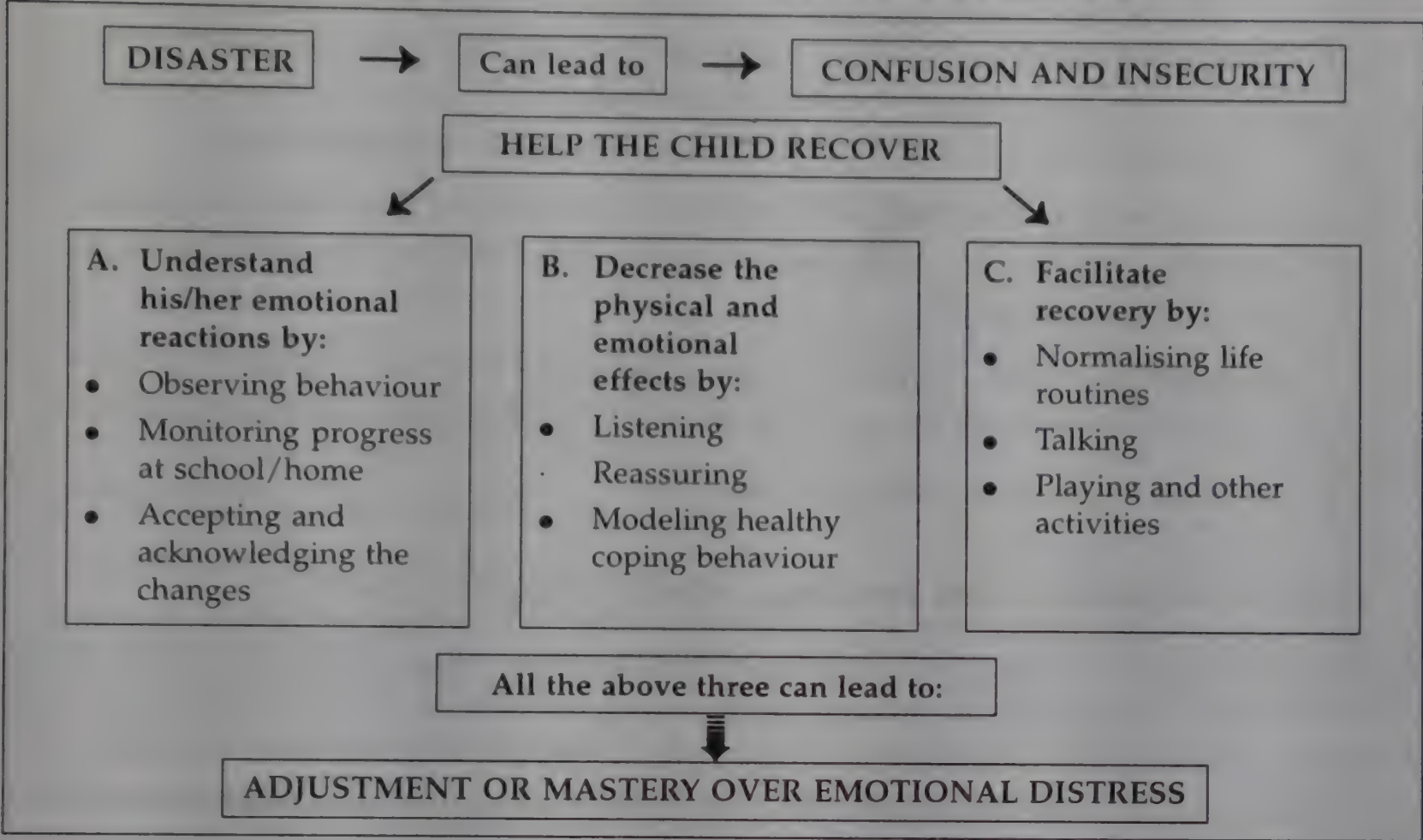
- ◆ **Help the child adopt healthy coping strategies.**

The child will often be confused about what can help him/her. You need to facilitate the recovery process. For this the first task is to normalise their life routines. Help them get involved in routine tasks like helping you with household work, getting back to attend school, and so on. Also you need to be available for play or 'talk time' where the child may want to talk or play out his/her experiences. Both these will help the child regain his/her original level of functioning.



The diagram below captures the recovery process after a disaster and what you can do to hasten the recovery.

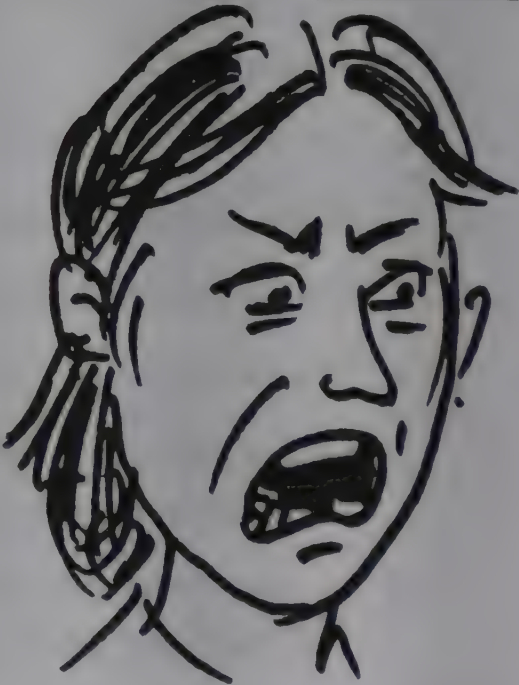
How to support a child’s recovery from a traumatic event



Each of the interventions given in the chart is detailed as follows:

Understand the emotional reactions

It is important that we do not neglect the child. The earlier section alerts us that even pre-school children are able to sense the feelings and emotions of adults around them and, this in turn, makes them very vulnerable. So keep a watch on the child and observe any changes the child is showing. For instance, a child who was quiet and reserved may become very irritable and aggressive. You need to accept and acknowledge this change in the child. Remember the reaction is only to the event, so do not shout at the child for misbehaving, but instead be caring and gentle to him/her. Children spend a lot of time in school; the child’s school performance might undergo a change if he/she is disturbed. Monitor the child’s progress at school, if you are a parent. If you are a teacher, make sure you inform the parents about any changes in the child’s behaviour at school.





**Remember, you can:**

- **Be warm and friendly** – if the child needs reassurance or comfort, he/she should feel comfortable to reach out to you
- **Accept the child as he/she is** – a lot of the emotional reactions may tend irritate you. Remember he/she is disturbed after the event and you should be understanding and give the child all the space for expression
- **Avoid flooding the child with advice** – you need to give the child space and not try and push your ideas of how to behave or be. Listen to his/her views and feelings
- **Respect the child** – however young the child may be, respect his/her views and emotions. Do not stop the child from expressing him/herself
- **Be there** – give both time and attention.

**Decrease the physical and emotional effects through support**

In helping the child to share his/her experiences and feelings about the whole event, allow him/her the space and security to feel accepted and be cared for. Once the child feels secure and there is a comfort situation around, he/she will be able to share thoughts and feelings. It is very important that we listen and try to understand the child's perspective.

Be there when the child wants to talk; do not push the child. The child may not talk at all but may find it comforting to know that there is somebody who cares.

**You need to:**

- Convince the child it is normal to think about the traumatic event
- Share some of your feelings and thoughts about the event
- Use child-friendly language and explanations
- Tell him/her to come and talk about it anytime
- Listen and provide answers to questions (even if they are very painful) while being reassuring all the while
- In case there are no adequate explanations, tell the child that you too are confused and upset by it
- A child sometimes takes on responsibility or feelings of guilt for the event, leading to very destructive and inappropriate behaviour. This should be checked and corrected immediately



- Be honest, open and clear
- Do not avoid the topic when the child brings it up
- Understand what the child feels about death, his/her fears, around it, etc. This will help communicate with him/her in a meaningful fashion.

### **Talking helps**

Talking about the event helps the child accept it and cope with the losses that follow. Talking, especially with older children, will be more useful since it could help to clarify thoughts and remove many misconceptions that may be confined within him/herself.



It is important to give factual information to the child. If not, he/she will 'fill in' the details which very often could be inaccurate. Just to be available and reassure the child, helps restore a great sense of safety and security.

### **Reassure the child**

Children need a lot of comfort and feeling of security. Hold the child close if the child is crying; if the child wakes up at night, be there to comfort him/her. In school the child may be feeling left out; support him/her during that time. All this will help the child feel cared for. If the child comes and sits close or clings to you, do not forcibly move him/her away. Allow the child to be near you if that brings him/her comfort. Pat the child once in a while and hold him/her close to show your affection.



### **Model healthy coping behaviour**

Children will look to you to learn how to cope with these incidents/events. So you need to model a healthy coping behaviour in how you are leading your life and trying to return to normalcy.

### **Make sure that you**

- ◆ Follow regular sleep times
- ◆ Eat well
- ◆ Remain calm and happy



- ◆ Take active interest in activities at home or outside
- ◆ Do not consume any alcohol or other addictive substances
- ◆ Exercise regularly
- ◆ Spend some time in recreational activities.

Your lifestyle will enable the child to also pick up healthy coping strategies. The child will realise that you have normalised your life and will be motivated to do the same.

### Facilitate recovery

#### ◆ Set up life routines

You need to help the child normalise his/her life. Children find it very comforting to have routines in their lives. If these routines are disturbed, they too get disturbed. The first step that you can take to help the child recover from the trauma is to re-establish life routines. This would mean:

##### • Ensuring that children

- Have their meals on time
- Go to bed at a particular time at night
- Re-start their schooling if they are of a school going age
- Get involved in helping with household work or sewing activities
- Spend time together as a family
- Spend time playing and having some fun daily
- Have time with you to share whatever they might be thinking or feeling.



This will help get their mind off from the experience they have been through and start looking positively at their future.

#### ◆ Play in the life of a child

Children use play to express themselves. Play is an extremely crucial communication tool for children. It serves the same purpose as talking is for adults. Selected toys and materials can help children act out feelings and fears as have been experienced. Children not only express themselves but also learn a lot of new things while playing. When children play and/or draw, a lot of their frustrations, fears, tension, anger and insecurities are expressed. This helps them face the emotions and decrease the power these emotions have on them.

During the initial days in the camp, the observation was that children went into two groups and enacted the riot scenes in the sand and children were seen making graves.



When given drawing material they drew out scenes from the riots. All these clearly indicate that children use play as a medium to express whatever is going on within them. It helps them to bring out their concerns and worries.

**An overview of how play and other activities help children:**

<p><b>To gain mastery over events</b></p> <p>Play helps children express their feelings and emotions. This release helps children feel lighter. Repeated expressions also lighten the power negative emotions have over children's lives and help them move forward.</p>	<p><b>In development of understanding</b></p> <p>Children can change their way of thinking, modify their behaviour or learn new healthy ways of interacting, behaving, or coping by reacting to concepts presented through stories, listening and observing other children, etc.</p>
<p><b>Develop self-esteem</b></p> <p>Opportunities to present their creations, talk about themselves, get praised by others for their work or behaviour, make new friends etc., help the children feel good.</p>	<p><b>In skill development</b></p> <p>While interacting and playing, the children learn to take turns, share things, play by the rules, learn to talk in a group, make friends, etc. These skills are developed during the process of play.</p>

Examining these in detail:

**PLAY HELPS TO GAIN MASTERY OVER ISSUES AND GET A SENSE OF POWER**

Children have the power to create, protect and destroy during play without harming anyone and this gives them a sense of control, which in their lives they may not have. All their fears can be played out without any real danger. The child can talk about things that cause pain. The negative emotions associated with those events are brought out and the intensity of those emotions lessens through repeated expression. This enables the child to look beyond the issues and move forward in life.





### **\*12-year-old girl**

All the games children played in the camps were related to fighting. They would shoot, fight, kill throw bombs at each other and say, *You are Hindu, the Bajrang Dal, we're Muslims. You wear saffron, we will wear green.*

This was seen across all the camps and children would repeatedly enact such scenes.

### **\*9-year-old boy**

The child drew a green figure with a black face and black limbs holding something in both its hands. On the top he drew a pair of scissors. The Community Level Helper (CLH) asked him to talk about his picture and this is part of the interaction that they had

**Child:** *This is a ghost (Bhoot).*

**CLH:** *A Ghost? Do you know him?*  
(Bhoot ko jaante ho?)

**Child:** *Yes, he stays here.*  
(Haan yahan reheta hai)

**CLH:** *When does he come? (Kab aata hai?)*

**Child:** *Sometimes. (Kabhi, kabhi)*

**CLH:** *Do you get scared? (Darr jaate ho?)*

**Child:** *No, my goddess protects me.*  
(Nahin, hamari kuldevi bachati hai).



Here the child is facing his fears through his drawings and he is also able to feel a sense of protection through his family goddess.

### **\*9-year-old boy**

One child, while playing with small plastic animals talked about how the big fish eats up the smaller fish, how the mother fish drives away the big fish, how the dog drives away the bad monkey, etc.

He was expressing his insecurities through play and showing some stronger and bigger animal protecting the weaker one.

### **\*11-year-old girl**

One child repeatedly drew the *tolawalas* (rioters) all over the sheet given to her for drawing.

She was ventilating her fears of the rioters by drawing them.

### **\*9-year-old boy**

The boy drew a female ghost (*chudel*).

**Child:** *When the chudel comes, it eats up big human beings, it has big teeth and comes in my dreams. (uske lambe daanth hote hain, aisa sapne mein aata hai.)*



**CLH:** *Then what do you do?*

**Child:** *I wake up my grandfather.*

The child has fears that come as nightmares but he knows he has a caring adult in his life who comforts him when he is scared.

**\*10-year-old boy**

This child used plasticine to make a camel and (galli) cart.

**Child:** *It was camel coloured (chikna rang ka tha) and I used to play with it everyday. I missed it a lot while at the camp (chawani par yaad aata tha).*

**CLH:** *Then what did you do?*

**Child:** *I felt like coming home and looking for it.*

He missed his toys which had many memories attached to them. He drew the cart twice in his drawings showing his deep attachment to that toy and shared his loss with the worker.

**\*8-year-old girl**

The child told the CLH that she missed her doll, Sunita the most. When she gets very upset she talks to her mother about it, who in turn has told her that she will buy her a new doll.

This child has a caring adult who understands the child's feelings of loss and offers her reassurance.

**\*12-year-old girl**

The child's drawing had a tree at one end of the page with a lake before it, a house with two doors partially closed and a figure peeping from each door. Ceiling fans were prominently visible inside the house. Outside, in front of the house, were figures of rioters with bludgeons and swords in their hands.

**She said:** *These are the people who had come to harm us. My mother is trying to close the door and my (Phuphi) aunt is trying to close the other door.*

A very clear expression of her experience, which she was able to share through her drawing.

**\*9-year-old girl**

She talked of how her doll, Rihana was burnt in the fire. At times she borrows somebody's doll, plays with it for sometime and then returns it. While talking she looks down and keeps rolling plasticine between her hands.

She was going over her loss and feeling sad as she talked about her doll.

**\*9-year-old boy**

His picture had a house with mountains and a rising sun in the background. Birds were flying across the sky and there were fish in the lake in front of the house. The



whole picture was done in red. This is the interaction the CLH had with him.

**CLH:** *Is this your home?*

**Child:** *No my house is not like this.*

**CLH:** *So what does your house look like?*

He drew another house, with two windows and a thatched roof.

**CLH:** *Oh this is what it looks like?*

**Child:** *No it is broken now.*

**CLH:** *Can you draw what it looks like now?*

He drew another picture with a hole on the roof to show that the wall was broken and the front door had a broken portion. Then on the side he drew a doll (*gudda*) and explained it had also been burnt during the riots. His eyes lit up as he spoke about how the doll would move when he played with it.

**CLH:** *Do you miss your gudda?*

**Child:** *Yes, I played with it and used to sleep with it.*

The child shared the experience of seeing his broken home. Talking about one loss led him to share the pain over losing his toy that he missed very much.

#### **\*10-year-old boy**

The child took great pains to make a taxi using the plasticine provided by the CLH and this is the interaction the CLH had with the child.

**Child:** *I had a small taxi, but that got burnt.*

**CLH:** *You did not take it away with you?*

**Child:** *No we had to run so suddenly.*

**CLH:** *Do you think about it?*

**Child:** *Yes, I used to come back from school and play with it. Now I play with a cardboard box (khokha hota hai na).*

**CLH:** *Do you feel sad?*

**Child:** *No, I feel angry (nahin gussa aata hai).*

The child was able to talk about the anger he felt when he thought about his toy that had been burnt up in the riots.

The following page has a list of activities that can be used to help children overcome the effects of the disaster. Details about the activities can be found at the end of the manual along with the relevant worksheets and material required to facilitate these activities.



**ACTIVITIES THAT CAN BE USED TO HELP CHILDREN  
GAIN MASTERY OVER THE EVENT**

	Activity	Can be used to...
1.	Facial expressions	Get an idea about how the child is feeling that day or maybe about an issue
2.	Feelings factory	Help the child understand that it is okay to share the feelings when he/she is upset or confused
3.	Deal with your anger	When the child is feeling angry about something
4.	Before and after outlines	Help the child understand that things and time will help him/her feel better and also a place for them to talk about what is bothering them
5.	Body mapping	Help the child understand that both good and bad feelings come up and we can deal with them
6.	Which mood	Understand how the child is feeling and what helps him/her to feel better
7.	What are you scared of?	Understand that all of us feel scared and how we can deal with those fears
8.	Candle talk	Talk about the loss of a loved person and how we need to live beyond that loss
9.	Group creation	Create a feeling of belonging, and sharing among the group about how they all feel
10.	The 'Bhaloo' inside	Understand that at times we act badly because we store a feeling inside and need to talk about that hurt or fear or anger
11.	How are you today?	Talk about their present feelings and deal with this
12.	Best Memory Picture	Understand that memories will always remain and help share their loss and grief



## **P**LAY HELPS TO BUILD SELF-ESTEEM AND SELF-CONFIDENCE

Being involved in activities like drawing or clay modelling helps children tremendously. They are able to create and talk about their creations. If they get appreciation for their work or behaviour, they tend to feel good about themselves. The process of creation is healing in itself and when they get recognition from others, they get a sense of well-being. They are able to make new friends while interacting with the facilitator and they develop a sense of belonging and acceptance by the group. All this positively enhances their perceptions about themselves.

\*8-year-old- boy in a group of three other boys was sitting with a CLH for a play session. He had a facial tic, which had developed after the riots. Whenever the CLH asked him anything the other children laughed and made fun of him. He in turn would sit quietly without answering, at times appearing as if he had not heard the question. The CLH engaged the other children in some activity and asked him to come and sit with her.

She asked him to draw his family members, but he replied that he did not know how to do so. The CLH then sat with him and together they drew a picture of his family members. The CLH then commented that he had shown himself smiling in the drawing, but now looked sad. He then shared that he did not like being teased and that upset him.

**The child is in a camp, an alien environment and children around tease him, which makes it worse for him. These sessions with the CLH and other children can help him to constructively use his time and also make friends, ultimately enhancing his self-esteem.**

At another group play session, a 12-year-old boy, who was small built, was being bullied by two other boys who were more vocal and boisterous than him. However, during a particular game he was made the leader and the process of having to lead the whole group contributed to him gaining more confidence. He was seen smiling and performing his role as the leader.

**Here the child was able to get an opportunity during the session to play the role of a leader and feel good about himself.**

During field work it was noticed that the children really took great pains to add bits of details like the gas pipe for the gas, or the seat over the camel's back while working with clay. They were proud of their work and did not want the items to be broken immediately. Appreciation for those creations was met with a lot of smiles. They enjoyed the process of making things and the end product was something they felt good about. Similarly, at one place they did fine paper-cutting work and brought out beautiful designs that were greatly appreciated by all.



The activities given below will help the children discover positive things about their life and themselves and all of these would add to their feeling of security and feeling good. Try and include these periodically in your work with children.

ACTIVITIES THAT CAN BE USED TO HELP CHILDREN FEEL GOOD ABOUT THEMSELVES		
	Activity	Can be used to...
1.	Whom can I trust?	Help children discover their support systems. Also, you can get an insight into whether they have caring adults in their life
2.	Sentence completion	The child will get a focus on him/herself and a chance to speak about him/herself. Can also be used for sharing deeper feelings
3.	Getting to know you	Getting the child to be comfortable to talk and be in a group
4.	My family drawing	Understand how the child perceives his/her family members
5.	People who love me	Child feels good about the warmth or love received. In case a child does not have someone, he/she can write about the need to facilitate the love network
6.	Feel good worksheets	Helps the child discover the qualities he/she has and feel good about him/herself.
7.	Help is there	Help the child discover many things to help him/her feel better
8.	Safety hand	Help the child understand that there are people who will help him/her out

**P** LAY HELPS IN DEVELOPING UNDERSTANDING

Storylines on themes like not lying, feeling helpless and sad, care and support, and so on were given to the children who then narrated a story on the basis of a thematic guideline. Children have an opportunity to learn without feeling threatened by their own personal fears. They learn by listening to other children relate how they cope



individually in a particular situation. They also watch how other children behave, and change accordingly. All this helps them enhance their own understanding of situations and issues and adopt more healthy ways of behaving and coping.

The CLH used a thematic story on care by showing a picture of a bear lying awake in bed and crying. The storyline was that the bear wakes up at night and cries because it gets bad dreams and feels scared. Later, the CLH posed a question to the children to ask who else felt scared like the bear.

\*One boy shared how he used to get bad dreams and said that just the previous night he had a nightmare in which he had seen ghosts.

The CLH asked him to draw what he had seen and the child drew a figure with long white teeth and very long hair. He used black colour to make the hair, arms and feet.

\*Another girl said that sometimes she used to feel like the bear in the story. The CLH then had the following interaction with her:

CLH: *Then what do you do?*

Child: *I tell my mother.*

CLH: *Do you feel better?*

Child: *Yes.*

Again these examples demonstrate how simple themes can be used to help children reflect on issues in their own lives. One can see how a child uses her coping skills by talking to a caring adult.





## ACTIVITIES THAT CAN BE USED TO HELP CHILDREN DEVELOP UNDERSTANDING

	Activity	Can be used to...
1.	Question bag or box	Answer their queries and concerns
2.	Misinterpretations	How something can be hurtful because of how we look at it
3.	When I felt hurt	What helps them cope with situations
4.	Opposing emotions	How to move from a negative to positive emotions
5.	Happy memories	We need to move on in life
6.	Story sessions	Cover various issues in a no – threatening manner
7.	What would you do	Help them reflect upon various possible solutions
8.	Lifelines	Discover the kinds of ups and downs they have been through; what they remember about their life most
9.	Learning new things	Help develop new healthy behaviour without being preachy
10.	My time	Help them make more constructive use of their time

## **P**LAY FACILITATES SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Children interact with some medium or with another human being and this improves many skills in the process (problem solving, communication, decision-making and social skills). They learn simple things like waiting for their turn to speak, listening to others and appreciating the work done by others. Learning to share was something they had to do, as often they would have to wait for the particular crayon that they wanted.





Often, just the experience of speaking in a group and having everyone listen was powerful enough for them to get some confidence. Being responsible in terms of having to return the caps of pens, doing what they were asked to do and following the basic ground rules were rich experiences. They were at times required to think about situations presented through stories, see how they fitted into their personal life and then talk about it. Thus, even thinking skills were being enhanced. Some level of self-control was enforced since rowdy behaviour was not tolerated. At one place the most aggressive child was given the responsibility of handing out pencils and, after everyone had completed their work, he had to get them back. This prevented him from behaving badly.

Another boy, who was a little shy, was asked to be a leader for a game and he felt really good playing that role. So through these activities the children subtly discover and reinforce good skills within themselves and also help inculcate new ones that they earlier did not have. You, as facilitators, need to see that this is happening indirectly. The learning needs to happen in an indirect manner so that the children do not feel like they are in school and yet are able to learn new, effective skills.

<b>Some skills that can be developed through these activities are:</b>
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- ◆ Speaking skills
- ◆ Listening skills
- ◆ Concentrating
- ◆ Waiting for turns
- ◆ Appreciating others
- ◆ Being positive
- ◆ Developing understanding and being sensitive to others
- ◆ Creative skills
- ◆ Finding solutions
- ◆ Co-operation
- ◆ Competition to some extent, perhaps
- ◆ Learning to have fun
- ◆ Sharing things.

\*In a particular session the CLH found that one boy was making fun of a plane that had been made by another child. The CLH then stated that she really liked the creation and



turned to the other children in the group to ask who else liked it. Most children, after looking at the creation, said that they liked it.

Three things happened in this interaction:

- The group appreciated the creation, which helped the child, who had made it, feel good.
- The child, who had made fun, though not directly reprimanded, learnt that his behaviour was not appreciated
- All the children in the group learnt to be appreciative and positive towards each other, thus picking up good social skills.

\*In another place, one girl realised that her sister was fond of a plasticine dog that the CLH had made, so she snatched the dog and crushed it, making her sister cry. She was generally being very boisterous and naughty throughout the session and kept a lot of the toys to herself, not wanting to share things with anyone.

*Such a child could, slowly through sessions, learn not to be a bully and relate well with other children. It is also important to note that such behaviour maybe related to attention the child is seeking from the CLH. Hence mere reprimanding will not help.*

This goal of using play and other activities to work with children will be fulfilled by the process we adopt while interacting with the children. As a facilitator, keep in mind that these skills need to be incorporated and enhanced during interaction with the children.



# ILLUSTRATIONS

## FROM THE FIELD

### I ILLUSTRATION ONE

\*8-year-old Farida had witnessed the rioters looting and destructing property. She feared them and used to get nightmares, as was revealed when she was put through the process of using various media.

#### Day 1

The first session involved the children drawing their family members on a sheet and then taking turns to introduce to the larger group all the persons drawn. Later, the group was given plasticine to make one toy which they had lost during the riots and missed very much. The children took turns to share what they had made and why they missed it. Farida had made a doll. Finally, they were again given sheets to draw whatever they wanted to and Farida drew a picture of the rioters. The interaction with the CLH and the girl goes as follows:

CLH: *What have you drawn?*

Child: *Rioters (tolawala).*

CLH: *Do you feel scared of them?*

Child: *Yes, at night.*

CLH: *What about during the day?*

Child: *No.*

CLH: *What else scares you?*

Child: *I am scared of ghosts, so I wear this thread (she showed me a thread around her neck).*

CLH: *Does this thread help you feel better?*

Child: *Yes. Now I am not so scared of ghosts.*

CLH: *So does the thread not reduce the fear of the tolawalas?*

Child: *No.*

CLH: *What do you feel scared about?*

Child: *They will come and kill me.*

Then Farida lost interest and started working with the clay doll she had made, so the CLH ended the interaction instead of trying to pursue the topic further during the day.



## Day 2

The session started with children drawing homes they used to live in. Farida told the CLH that she could not draw her house. The CLH tried telling her that they would do so together and that it was very easy, but the girl vehemently refused. Later, she came up to the CLH and asked if she could draw her grandmother's home. She started drawing and then made a rioter-like figure inside the house, showed it to the CLH and said that the drawing had got spoilt. The CLH told her she could take some fresh sheets. But, once again she took some paper and repeated the same drawing. Then suddenly she lost interest in drawing and did not want to talk about it.

Again it can be seen that this girl did not even want to think about her home because doing so was still very traumatic for her. The fact was not that she did not know how to draw a house, but that she did not want to draw her own home. Her fear of the rioters was the constant issue that emerged repeatedly through her work. On talking to her, the CLH found out that she had dreamt about the rioters the previous night.

Later, the group had time to play with the clay to make whatever they wanted and this girl made a doll, the CLH commented, *You have made the same doll?* and Farida confirmed this by nodding.

**It is clear that it is difficult for this 8-year-old to overcome her fears; even after 6 months Farida feels scared at night.**

## Day 3

The CLH decided to spend some extra time talking with Farida separately. She said that she felt the rioters would come and kill her. She used to see the rioters in her dreams. Whenever she had a nightmare she would go and wake up her father. She said that she had started getting such dreams only after coming to the camp, although at the time of the interview it was a little better.

### What follow-up is required

- ◆ Encourage the child to pray and see how the prayers work for her in terms of giving her strength
- ◆ Maintain regular contact to help her ventilate her feelings some more till her drawings reflect some form of normalcy
- ◆ Have regular sharing sessions to check out whether she is improving and getting out of her trauma or not
- ◆ Use stories and play to highlight coping mechanisms to get better sleep



- ♦ Interact with adult caregivers in her family to reinforce the support and care they have been giving the child.

## I ILLUSTRATION TWO

### **\*17-year-old Saira was staying at the camp**

Work done with her clearly demonstrates the power the media has in helping children ventilate and talk about their fears and pain. Over a period of two days there were several observations made about Saira and also various media were used to interact with her.

#### **Day 1 and 2**

The CLH was working with a group of children aged between 8 and 12 years. Clearly Saira was much older and had been left out of the group. Saira would still come and sit near the group and ask for drawing material and spend time making very colourful paintings of homes and other decorative designs.

What stood out about Saira was her child-like behaviour about wanting to draw along with the children and her constant smile. On enquiring with the *Amanpathiks*, the CLH learnt that Saira had two younger mentally challenged siblings. Observing her, the CLH felt that Saira too perhaps had mild traces of retardation.

#### **Day three**

As the CLH was about to leave, Saira asked her to stay on for a while. As that day was Thursday, a day when Muslim women go to the Dargah to offer prayers, the CLH asked why she was not going with the rest of the camp women. Following is the interaction the CLH had with Saira:

**Saira:** *No, I have the responsibilities of my brother and sister. I do not have a mother (meri maa nahin haina, is liye). She remained very composed and calm.*

**CLH:** *I am sorry, but did she pass away some time back?*

**Saira:** *She was killed during the riots. They cut her up with a sword.*

Then she looked down and sat quietly. As the CLH turned, she observed tears rolling down Saira's cheeks. The CLH put an arm around her and just sat comforting her, saying nothing for sometime. Later, after Saira seemed a little more composed, the CLH asked whether she missed her mother a lot. Saira nodded and the CLH noticed she had a sewing needle and was poking it into her finger.



The CLH asked her why she was poking herself and Saira did not reply for sometime and then later said, *When I am upset then I poke myself*. After sometime she was smiling again and agreed to spend more time the following day with the CLH.

#### Day four

The CLH gave some activity to the other children to engage them and moved on to sit with Saira. Saira used some paper to draw a figure, which she said was a ghost and then shared this with the CLH.

CLH: *You feel scared of it?*

Child: *No.*

CLH: *Then what is it that scares you?*

Child: *God.*

CLH: *Why what does god do?* Saira kept quiet.

CLH: *So what do you do when you are scared?*

Child: *Get angry.*

CLH: *Okay, so you get angry when you are scared. Then what happens?*

Child: *I take blood out.*

CLH: *How?*

Child: *With a needle, nails or I cut myself.*

CLH: *Then how do you feel?*

Child: *Better.*

CLH: *So you take out blood when you are angry and it makes you feel better. Is it always your own blood or do you hurt others too?*

Child: *No, only mine.*

CLH: *When did you do this last?*

Child: *Don't remember.*

CLH: *Think and tell me.*

Child: *Yesterday*

CLH: *Why?*

Child: *When I remembered my mother yesterday.*

This behaviour of wanting to hurt herself was something the CLH had noticed, but not commented on the first day. The *Amanpathiks* working with her need to pay special attention and constantly monitor whether Banu's behaviour is lessening or becoming worse and see whether she needs to be referred for professional help.

When she spoke of taking out blood, the CLH did not show any surprise. She just accepted what Banu said and then moved on to find out how she did it and when she



did it last. This acceptance enabled the girl to feel more comfortable to further share how she felt and be frank about it.

Later, when the group was doing some clay work, Saira made kitchen utensils and also made some *chappatis* (bread). The CLH commented on how round Saira had made the bread and that she herself could never make such round chappatis. Saira looked surprised and then shared with the CLH what she had cooked for her family. This helped lighten the mood a bit.

The group moved on to a story telling session and the CLH invited Saira to tell a story. But Saira insisted that the CLH tell one first. She then looked at the four plastic dogs kept on the ground and asked, *Why don't these puppies have a mother?*

The CLH took up the **family of dogs** to tell a story about a caring father who gave love and affection of both parents to his children after his wife died. The story says how the father reprimands the children only because he is concerned about them. The story also focused upon the fact that the mother had been asked by god to come up and look after puppies in heaven who had to leave their parents behind on earth. The mother had been chosen because she had been a specially nice person; her own puppies did not have a mother but had a loving father.

Saira was smiling as she sat listening to the story. Then the CLH asked her to tell a story. Saira looked at the thematic story cards and then chose one of a bear with a flower saying *I will tell a story, but without this flower.*

She collected all the cards and told the following story.

*One day we were eating and then I looked out of the grilled window and saw a (tola) mob had come and then they cut my mother up with a sword.*

She started looking down and crying. The CLH moved close to her and held her hand and put one hand on her back and just sat with her.

After sometime the CLH asked, *"You really miss your mother?"* she nodded in response.

**CLH:** *Your mother must have been a very nice person – just like the one in the story I told you. Just as you remember her, your mother must be watching over and remembering you too.*

She shook her head and said, *No, she does not remember me.*

**CLH:** *You think so? You have so much of love for each other that I am sure she remembers you greatly and misses you just as much.*

She did not respond, but kept holding the CLH's hand tightly. Then the CLH asked whether she wanted to just sit like that for some more time and Saira nodded and so they just sat for some time till she felt better. Later, Saira took up some paper cutting work and she did some beautiful creative work with coloured paper.



As can be seen, the cards were just a medium which Saira used to relate her own painful story. The family of dogs story had made her think and talk of her own loss. Although she was 17 years old, Saira needed and sought reassurance and care. She definitely feels tremendously responsible for her younger siblings, but the child within her needs support and care to deal with her personal pain and loss.

#### Follow-up to be done

- ♦ Saira needs to talk a lot more about her mother; she needs to ventilate her feelings and fears completely. She is feeling very responsible for her family, but needs the care and reassurance of an adult and this should be conveyed to her father. The CLHs need to explore whether that kind of assurance is coming from him
- ♦ She also needs to be involved, on a regular basis, in a lot of activities like paper work and so on, that allow her to have some fun and recreation
- ♦ Lastly and importantly, her behaviour of cutting herself whenever she is upset needs to be explored and also monitored to see whether it is decreasing or increasing. If it is not decreasing, then she will need special help at some point, although she does not need referral at the moment.

#### I ILLUSTRATION THREE

**\*Use of varied media – some may not work. It takes time to reach out to children, so respect the pace at which a child may relate to you.**

The CLH was with a group of four children in the field area. One among them was 14-year-old Kairunissa. She was very quiet, yet participated in all the activities. Using clay, she made all sorts of kitchen utensils, mentioning that some resembled those utensils at home. On asking whether the utensils were still there or had been destroyed during the riots, Kairunissa said, *No, they are there at home.*

Kairunissa drew happy faces for all her family members, including herself. But her younger sister drew Kairunissa as unhappy and mentioned that their mother used to beat Kairunissa. Kairunissa did not talk or share anything and looked down most of the time. She continued with activities as if everything in her life was okay. During story sessions she did not share anything about her feelings.

In the last session, faces depicting various emotions were laid out on the ground. The children were asked to pick up one that described how they were feeling that day and then share with the group the reason. Kairunissa picked out the sad face saying that she really missed her *Appa* (elder sister), who no longer stayed with them, but had been very fond of Kairunissa.



This experience indicates that a medium that works well with some children, need not work with some others. In such cases, another medium needs to be used. It also showed that CLHs need to wait till the child feels comfortable about sharing his/her feelings. Even though the CLH had noticed that Kairunissa was quiet and her sister had endorsed this, the CLH waited till Kairunissa herself was ready to talk. **A child's wish and emotions need to be respected.**

## **I ILLUSTRATION FOUR**

**\*CLHs must be prepared with stories to facilitate the use of any medium and to get the process going.**

While working with a group of children, the CLH wanted them to share their experiences about something precious they had lost during the riots. So clay was given to the group. The CLH herself moulded a dog. Then she told the group that when her pet dog passed away, she had felt very sad. Upon hearing the story, the children also remembered the stray dog on their street and how they used to play with it. The children spent sometime discussing its colour and how when the municipality van used to come around, they always hid it in their homes. But on the day of the riots, while they were trying to escape, and they were in the auto they saw the dog on the road. It kept standing alone and they could not bring it along. One among them made a clay dog as he missed it, while others made toys.

**Here the process of losing something was initiated with a story by the CLH. CLHs need to be ready with examples to help the children share their feelings.**

## **I ILLUSTRATION FIVE**

**\*Representing life situations through their drawings**

A group of children had been asked to draw out their family portrait and share their work with the group. One child, apart from his immediate family, had drawn two additional figures – one had something in its hand and the other figure was reaching out to the first figure. These images were smaller than the rest of the drawing.

The child explained the figures as being his uncle and aunt. His uncle had a bottle in his hand and his aunt was trying to hit him for drinking alcohol. The CLH probed further and found out that in the initial phase after the riots, the child had gone to the uncle's home to spend some time, but had disliked being there because there were constant fights and his uncle used to be drunk.

The situation of the child's life was being represented very clearly through his expressions.



One child had his uncle and aunt live along with his family. But he did not draw them because they fought with his mother and he did not like them. Some children showed their parents as angry and on further probing it was seen that the anger and irritability were due to their loss during the riots, lack of finances and the future seeming bleak. In one drawing the father had been shown crying. This, the child explained, was because his father used to return from Chamanpura (the area where their home had been) very upset.

These drawings give an insight into the family life each child is experiencing. These drawings can later be used to work with adults, if the child requires care and comfort. You can also get an idea about whom the child is close to within the family.

## **I ILLUSTRATION SIX**

**\*Ventilation and bonding**

A girl was making models and became so fond of a doll she had made, that she was very upset when another girl broke the doll. In other instances, some children put their models up and asked for them not to be broken till the end. They used to come back to those creations once in a while.

The power of the clay medium is very strong. The CLH should always comment positively about the models made by children and encourage each one to talk more about what they have made, what they used to do with the toy when it was with them and how they feel now that it is not there. This really helps children ventilate and share their pain. The bond that develops with children is also amazing. Many children started crying when they remembered their toys.

## **I ILLUSTRATION SEVEN**

**\*Use story sessions to help them talk about their issues in an indirect manner**

Story sessions are a great way to get children to talk about their fears. A group of children were shown thematic story cards with a Bear as the central character doing various things like eating, sleeping, crying, and so on. The discussion started about what the bear did when he felt scared at night. Then the children were asked about what they did when they felt scared. One child said that she used to wake up her father and then felt better. Another child said he used to repeat god's name and go to sleep until the morning would come; he added that he used to get totally under his quilt which helped him feel better. A third child said that when he was scared, he did nothing, but would sit all curled up and continue being scared.



Here one can see how different children are coping with their fears. As far as the girl is concerned, she has an attentive caregiver who provides her security, whereas the last child does not seem to have people to talk with and so maybe the CLH would need to talk to his parents or adult caregivers and let them know what to do to help the child feel more secure at night. For the child who has faith in god, it would help to encourage the child to pray before he sleeps.

Through such interactions, children also learn how to help themselves from the experiences of other children.

## **I ILLUSTRATION EIGHT**

\*Make time for fun activities; it will help with skill development, raise self-esteem of the children and help in forming a bond within the group.

Fun games are important as seen earlier in the text. At times it helps quieter children to be leaders, feel important, help them gain confidence and feel better about themselves. Playful children, when given responsibilities, learn social skills. Just waiting for their turn to speak, listening to others, sharing play material – all help in developing good social skills.

The interactions could be used to facilitate skill development. Any one activity could fulfil differential needs of various children.

The next chapter looks at children who may require some additional attention because of the special circumstances they may be facing.



# SPECIAL CHILDREN

It is now well-accepted that children are vulnerable and need attention when they have experienced some traumatic event in their lives. They look to adults for support and care and we need to be available for them in a manner that they can relate to us and master the negative effects the event would have had on their lives. However, even in such a situation, there are some groups of children who require even greater care and support. This section will look at some of those groups.

## Orphaned children

- ◆ The child needs to be with relatives who can look after him/her
- ◆ Integration with the new family members is very important for the child
- ◆ The child should find the space to share the pain about the loss of parents with people around him/her
- ◆ Encourage the child to remember the death anniversaries, talk about the good times they had with their parents and so on
- ◆ He/she should be helped to remember the people they have lost, but also learn to relate to the new people in his/her life
- ◆ The child needs to relate to the new environment as his/her own
- ◆ Listening and being available is very important
- ◆ Help the child to normalise his/her life.



### \*10-year-old girl

This girl was really scared and would not come down to be with the children when they were participating in play activities at the camp. The CLHs working with this child realised this and spent time in her room – a known space for the child – and made her do some activities. They also spoke to the aunt whom the child stayed with and helped her understand that the child needed a lot of reassurance and care.

At first the child did not talk much. Later, she started remembering things about her life before the riots and talked about the family members she had lost in the riots. Once, while talking, she started weeping and cried a lot. Slowly, as time passed and



she started feeling comfortable, she felt confident enough to talk to the CLHs. She was motivated to come down and be with the other children. She was also given educational support from Rajiv Gandhi Foundation.

### Children whose parents have remarried

- ◆ Children who have a new parent to adjust with will find this change threatening
- ◆ It is important to reassure them
- ◆ Give time and space for natural bonding to occur
- ◆ Make sure that they have special time with you alone so that they do not reject the new parent
- ◆ Ensure that the basic needs of the children are being met
- ◆ Be available to talk and discuss their fears and apprehensions when they need you.



#### **\*8-year-old boy**

This child's parents have remarried. His mother does not want him to live with her nor is his father keen to have him in his home. The child has a grandmother whom he visits once in a while, but even she does not have the capability to offer him a good home since she lives with another son's family.

The child earns by working in a cycle shop and thus has money to spend how he wants to. He has started eating a lot of addictive substance, which obviously is bad for his health. *Amanpathiks* spoke to his family about whether they could give him a stable home. Clearly this child does not have the care and attention that he requires and is in a specially vulnerable position as his immediate family support is gone.

### Children who have been disabled or injured

- ◆ Professional help should be sought for the rehabilitation of the disabled child
- ◆ The child may require special equipment like crutches and so on to enable him/her get a level of independence
- ◆ The child may need space to discuss the difficulty of losing a limb, or getting burnt. He/she may need to discuss their anger, frustrations and depression regarding the same
- ◆ Listening and being available is very important
- ◆ Help the child normalise his/her life.



### **\*\*\* 8-year-old boy**

He survived the riots with 20 per cent burns by jumping into a water tank. He remembers his father was watching from the roof, and he shouted out that a mob was approaching. They were sitting on the bed, crying and holding hands. The mob came towards their home. He remembers them screaming, *Kill them, cut them!* The police was with them. They had swords and were carrying flaming torches. They decided to run towards their friend's home in Gangotri Nagar, thinking they would be safe there. *They were Hindus and we used to watch TV in their homes. I played with their children.*

When this boy's family got there, they found these friends were part of the mob. *My family was holding hands and running, but we got separated. I saw them drag my mother and set her on fire. She was screaming. Everyone was screaming. Then they set me on fire too. I ran and jumped into a water tank. There were three other children in the tank.*

### **Children who are challenged**

- ♦ Mentally or physically challenged children would have also experienced anxiety and shock during this disaster
- ♦ Try and normalise their life routines
- ♦ Reassurance and extending a feeling of security are very important in such cases
- ♦ Specialist care may be required for some.

### **\*8-year-old girl**

During the riots, her home was attacked. People used kerosene, petrol, swords, sticks, cylinder and gas bottles to destroy her home. She, along with her family members, was also injured during the stone throwing by the mob. On being asked about the riots, she starts crying and repeats, *Everything has been destroyed, looted and burnt.* Loud noises and crowds frighten her. Her mental ability has decreased more than before. She hardly speaks and at times cries in her sleep.

### **\*12-year-old boy**

He is mentally challenged and cannot speak or hear. His father was a rickshaw driver and there are six members in his family. His home was burnt during the riots and he, along with his father, were injured. He appears disturbed and describes what he experienced and how the Muslims were tortured. He does not go to school, but whenever the *Amanpathik* passes by, he recognises him and clings on to him. Since the child is hearing impaired, the *Amanpathik* found out about a school for challenged children and has got him admission there.



In some instances a child may require the help of a specialist and each caregiver needs to be aware and alert to the need for such help.

**Referral is required if:**

- No sign of any reduction in the reactions
- Increase in severity
- It is distressing to the family /the child
- Interferes with the daily routine of the child
- Interferes with interaction with others like friends and relatives
- Interrupts work or school.

As an adult caregiver you need to take the child to a specialist. Follow up on the advice given both at school and home. Discuss the progress periodically with the specialists. The table given below describes some of the symptoms that may require referral.

**Behaviour for which referral maybe required:**

<p><b>Conduct problems</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Disobeys people</li><li>• Violent towards peers</li><li>• Steals or tells lies.</li></ul>	<p><b>Overactive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Unable to sit still even for a small time</li><li>• Daydreams and has difficulty in concentrating</li><li>• Engages in impulsive behaviour and activities that are dangerous like climbing and running on the streets</li><li>• Become over-excited in large groups</li><li>• Low tolerance for frustration</li><li>• Learning difficulties</li><li>• Destroys things.</li></ul>
<p><b>Somatisation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Complains of aches and pains</li><li>• Difficulties in bodily functions like breathing, increased heart beat, giddiness</li><li>• Wants to go to the doctor, but doctor finds no medical problems</li></ul>	<p><b>Post-traumatic stress disorder</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Re-experiences the riots and violence through nightmares, thinking about it in the day, having flashbacks</li><li>• Avoids anything that will remind him of that day</li></ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaints interfere with daily activities like school, studies and so on</li> <li>• Gets attention from others due to these complaints.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased state of alertness – nervousness, startled response, poor concentration, disturbed sleep</li> <li>• Distant from friends and family and does not enjoy activities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Severely depressed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feels sad all the time</li> <li>• Cries a lot</li> <li>• Refuses to play</li> <li>• Has no interest in games</li> <li>• Body posture is limp and eyes lack lustre</li> <li>• Does not eat well and gets thinner</li> <li>• Tired all day and wants to keep lying or be by himself</li> <li>• Unable to sleep at night</li> <li>• Talks of ending his/her life.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Substance abuse</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admits to taking alcohol or drugs or <i>gutka</i> (tobacco leaves)</li> <li>• Smells of these substances</li> <li>• Moves between extreme restlessness to lethargy</li> <li>• Unable to sleep</li> <li>• Slurred speech and inability to communicate clearly</li> <li>• Decline in school or other work they used to do</li> <li>• Overspending money or claims to misplace money</li> <li>• Indiscriminate sexual behaviour.</li> </ul>

Here is an example to show how relevant and timely referral helped this child recover fully from the effect of trauma.

**\*14-year-old boy**

This boy used to work in a cycle shop owned by his family. He had been a very responsible boy both at home and outside. His mother was fond of this child the most and relied a great deal on him. He had an elder sister and brother. On the day the riots broke out, he came back home on a cycle and witnessed a lot of violence on the way. On reaching home he was down with high fever, but soon recovered from the same. A week later his father, while returning home from work, was stabbed to death. On hearing this he again went into fever. Even though he saw his father’s dead body, he refused to believe that his father was dead. He avoided the topic completely. He became very quiet and lost all interest in life. He stopped talking and could not sleep well at night.

Later, he developed speech difficulties and began stammering. He stopped going for work and remained at home. His hands used to shake. He said he felt very angry

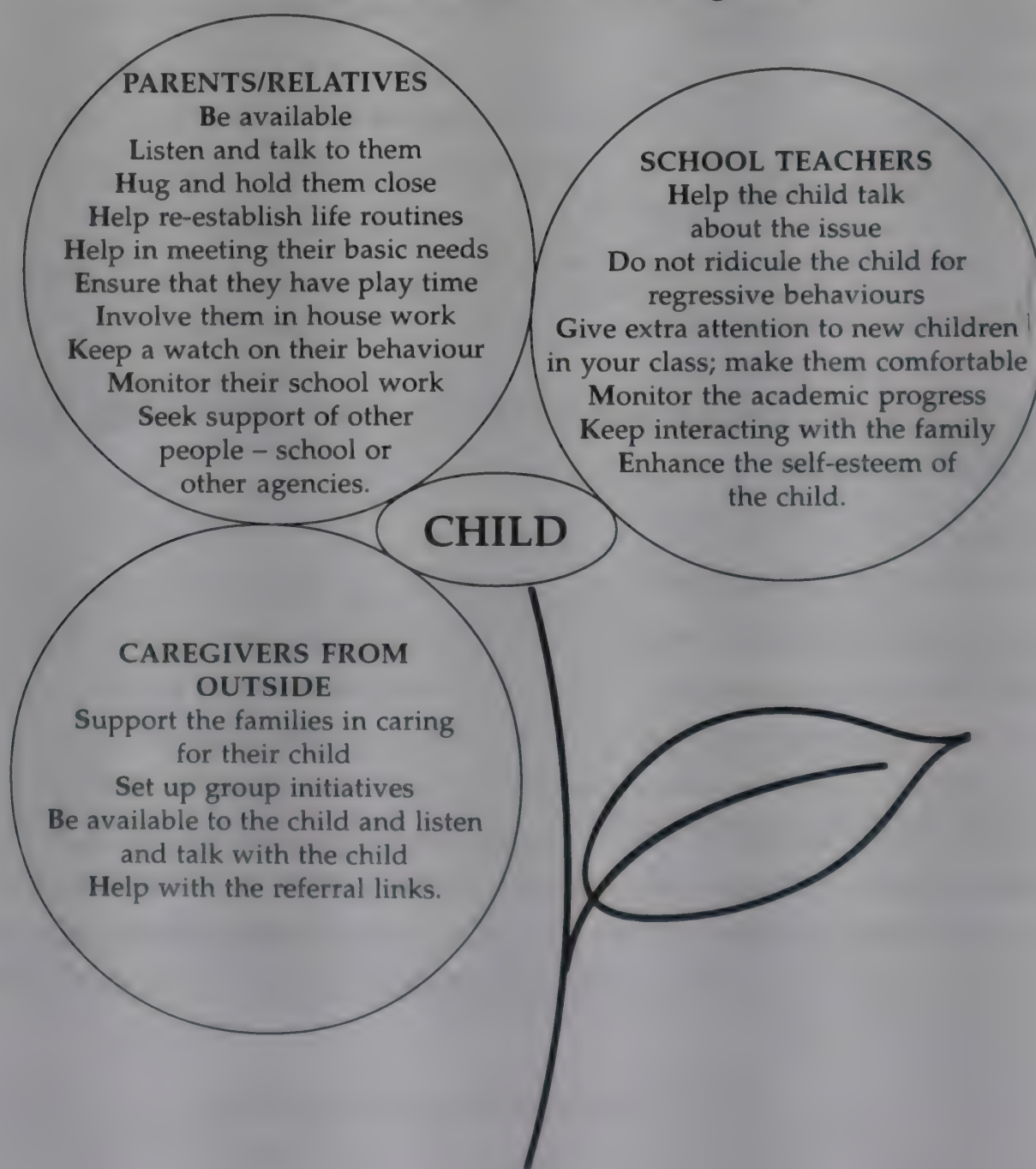


at what happened. As days went by, his condition only got worse. He started becoming very aggressive, especially towards his sister, so much so that she had to go and live with the neighbours for a few days.

Then *Amanpathiks* got him to see a psychiatrist and this referral helped him return to his normal level of functioning. Today, after being on medication for a while, he has returned to work at least for part of the day and regained his independence to a large extent. His speech is normal and coherent. His hands have stopped shaking and he is no longer aggressive towards his sister. As can be seen, due to one person, the entire family set-up was disturbed. This example shows how timely referral is important to prevent illness from setting in.

Again, it is important that in the care of children, all the caregivers contribute to the process of helping the child recover fully. The following diagram puts down simple things that each person can do for the child.

### Role of Different Caregivers





# HOW YOU CAN MOVE FORWARD

This section will help you make choices about which activity to use for your work with children. It will help you understand which medium will work best with which age group. Lastly, it will help you in making a better choice while selecting an activity to use for a specific purpose in mind. The relevant worksheets to be used are included in the manual and reference has been made through page numbers. The section also contains a list of items that would be required to make a play kit for working with children.

## **S**OME TIPS FOR FACILITATING ACTIVITIES WITH CHILDREN

- ◆ Set up some rules which the children should adhere to. Make it a group responsibility that everyone will follow:
  - Listen when someone is speaking
  - Sit in a circle so that nobody fights or troubles others
  - Talk only for yourself
  - Do not tell tales about other children
  - If we do not follow rules, other children can choose to keep us out of the circle.
- ◆ Make sure that as a facilitator you choose to have children of similar ages in one group so that it is easier for you to work with them
- ◆ Make sure you remember what you did in the last session with the children because you may need to raise certain issues from the last session
- ◆ Choose only a number of children that you can handle at one time – a maximum of 8
- ◆ Keep aside a one-to-one session time for children who need some extra help, like a child who is constantly breaking down every time something about the riots comes up
- ◆ Do not have more than two to three hours at a stretch with any group
- ◆ Have at least two activities per session
- ◆ Always have a good ending for your sessions



**K** NOW WHICH MEDIUM SUITS WHICH AGE GROUP

Adapted from Geldard et al: 1 indicates it will work very well 2 that it is okay and 3 that it is the least suited medium.

Medium	2–5 years	6–10 years	11–14 years	15–18 years
Stories	1	1	2	3
Clay	2	1	1	1
Drawing	2	1	1	1
Painting	1	1	2	2
Games	2	1	1	2
Play	1	1	2	3
Animals	3	1	1	1
Puppets	1	1	2	2
Worksheets	3	1	1	2

**A** CTIVITY KEY INDICATING THE PURPOSE AND SUITABILITY FOR VARIOUS AGE GROUPS

Name of the activity	Purpose	Age group	Individual/ Group activity	Page number
Animals calling	Fun	6 onwards	Group	74
Arm link	Fun	5 onwards	Group	72
Electric squeeze	Fun	5 onwards	Group	72
Frozen lion	Fun	5 onwards	Group	73
Fruit basket	Fun	5 onwards	Group	73
Mime an act	Fun	8 onwards	Group	72
Paper cutting	Fun	5 onwards	Both	71
Pass the mask	Fun	5 onwards	Group	72
Pass the smile	Fun	5 onwards	Group	72



Places	Fun	8 onwards	Group	73
Snake catcher	Fun	8 onwards	Group	74
Water and ice	Fun	5 onwards	Group	73
Zoom and brake	Fun	5 onwards	Group	72
Mirror	Fun/Self esteem	8 onwards	Group	71
Blind car	Fun/ Understanding	8 onwards	Group	71
Dream person or object	Understanding/ Ventilation	8 onwards	Both	72
Being something else	Fun/Ventilation	8 onwards	Both	73
Describe your hands	Fun Self esteem	8 onwards	Both	73
Name tags	Fun Self esteem	5 onwards	Both	71
Feel good worksheets	Self esteem	5 onwards	Both	63
Getting to know you	Self esteem	8 onwards	Group	62
Whom can I trust	Self esteem	5 onwards	Both	61
Safety hands	Self esteem	6 onwards	Both	64
Family drawing	Self esteem/ Ventilation	5 onwards	Both	62
My time	Understanding	8 onwards	Both	70
Opposing emotions	Understanding	8 onwards	Group	66
Question box/bag	Understanding	5 onwards	Group	65
Story sessions	Understanding	5 onwards	Both	67
What would you do?	Understanding	8 onwards	Group	68
Happy memories	Understanding/ Ventilation	8 onwards	Group	66



<b>Lifelines</b>	Understanding/ Ventilation	10 onwards	Both	69
<b>Learning new things</b>	Understanding/ Ventilation/ Self esteem	5 onwards	Both	69
<b>Before after outlines</b>	Ventilation	5 onwards	Both	56
<b>Bhaloo inside</b>	Ventilation/ Understanding	5-10	Group	59
<b>Body mapping</b>	Ventilation	5 onwards	Both	56
<b>Deal with your anger</b>	Ventilation	5 onwards	Both	55
<b>Facial expressions</b>	Ventilation	5 onwards	Both	53
<b>Group creation</b>	Ventilation	8 onwards	Group	59
<b>How are you today?</b>	Ventilation	5 onwards	Both	60
<b>What are you scared of?</b>	Ventilation	8 onwards	Both	58
<b>Best memory picture</b>	Ventilation	8 onwards	Individual	60
<b>Candle talk</b>	Ventilation/ Understanding	8 onwards	Both	58
<b>Feelings factory</b>	Ventilation/ Understanding	5 onwards	Group	54
<b>Which mood</b>	Ventilation/ Understanding	8 onwards	Both	57



## **D** DETAILS OF THE ACTIVITIES FOR GAINING MASTERY

### Facial expressions

#### Material

Pre-drawn faces depicting various emotions given in pictures 1–9.

#### Aim

- ◆ An understanding into what the child feels about a certain event, issue or individual in his/her life
- ◆ Discover what helps the child cope.

#### Process

- Lay out the pre-drawn faces on the floor. Tell them they are going to play a game.  
*I am going to ask you a question and you have to pick up the face that represents how you feel*
- Ask the child a question which could be:  
*When you think about school, how do you feel?*  
*Would you like to go back to your earlier home?*  
*How do you feel at night?*  
*How are you feeling today?*  
*How did you feel during the recent riots?*
- The child has to respond to the question by picking up the face that best suits his/her answer. For example if the child feels scared at night then he will choose the face given relating to fear in the picture
- Then have a round of sharing as to why each child chooses that particular expression
- If someone gets stuck or no one wishes to share, be ready with your own choice and share this with them so that they feel comfortable to share their own expressions
- Tell them that all of us feel angry, sad, and happy, and if he/she talks with some adult about such feelings they will feel better.

#### Outcome

- You will get an idea about how the child feels about things or people in his/her life
- You will get an idea about how he/she copes with those feelings
- The child will be able to share his/her thoughts and feelings in a non-threatening manner manner.



## Feelings factory

### Material

The factory of feelings chart as given in picture 11.

### Aim

- ◆ To introduce the idea to the children that both good and bad feelings are part of us
- ◆ It is okay to have these feelings
- ◆ These bad feelings go away
- ◆ There are ways to get those bad feelings out of us.

### Process

- Tell the child/group you are going to tell them a story
- Use the pre-drawn chart to tell the story
  - A factory inside us produces good and bad feelings like anger, sadness, happiness and so on*
  - Most of the time happy feelings are produced inside so we feel happy and smile*
  - Sometimes the factory does not work well and more bad feelings are produced; then we feel sad or angry*
  - When we cry, talk about such feelings or write them down; that makes us feel better.*
- Now ask them to share when he/she has recently faced some problems and bad feelings have been overproduced
- After this sharing ask them what they do when they feel bad
- Tell them that crying and talking about such feelings would help them feel better
- Give an example of your own if there is hesitation from the group members.

### Outcome

- You will get an insight into what upsets the child and how he/she copes with those emotions
- Secondly, introduce them to how they can cope better by sharing; how you cope with similar emotions or take an example of some child who has coped in an effective manner.



## Deal with your anger

### Material

Clay, drawing material, sponge bricks, hit-me doll, edible beans and a box.

### Aim

- ◆ Help the child identify what makes him/her angry
- ◆ Express his/her anger as a symbolic representation of the cause of anger
- ◆ Ventilate his/her feelings and slowly experience calmness
- ◆ Cope with his/her negative emotions.

### Process

- They first need to draw or create, using a medium, what they are angry or upset with
- There are various options for creating this image. The medium you may like to use could be:
  - A clay model of the person*
  - Drawing of the person or situation*
  - A soft doll*
  - A hit-me doll*
  - A box into which beans/stones can be thrown.*
- The second step would be to ventilate his/her feelings:
  - The clay model could be destroyed*
  - The drawing could be scribbled over or torn*
  - The soft doll could be hit with sponge bricks or shouted at*
  - The hit-me doll could be beaten repeatedly*
  - The beans or stones could be thrown into the box.*
- These acts would help the child get rid of the negative feelings and hurt within him/her
- As an example to get the child/group started, you must demonstrate how you are angry with a person and then get the children to start thinking
- Close the session with the fact that if he/she wants to talk about it you will listen. If they feel more comfortable not sharing it, respect their wish.

### Outcome

- The child will accept some of the negative emotions that he/she has
- There is great deal of release/ventilation of the anger and negative emotions.



## Before and after outlines

### Material

Copies of the body outline given in picture 10

Crayons representing different emotions like red for anger, black for sadness, yellow for happiness, green for pain and illness, light blue for peace and calm.

### Aim

Help the child connect with his/her emotions, and to see how he/she experience it in the body.

### Process

- Give out the copies of the body picture
- Ask the children to think of themselves and then colour the body parts where they felt pain immediately after the event
- Have a ready-made demonstration model representing yourself and include negative emotions in your model. This could help the children feel free to share their own negative emotions
- Then have them colour another body outline to show how they feel now after so much time has gone by.

### Outcome

- The child will get in touch with his/her emotion
- They will ventilate how they are feeling
- You will get an understanding into how he/she is experiencing emotions in the body
- This works very well with children who are very specific in their anger or sadness.

## Body mapping

### Material

Newspaper, marker pens/crayons, feeling words on small cards or coloured circles representing different emotions.

### Aim

A child can be helped to connect with his/her emotions.

### Process

- Ask a child to lie down on a newspaper and draw an outline
- Then present a list of happy and sad feelings to the child



- Ask the child to choose one
- Ask where she/he feels it and place the emotions card in the body outline
- While this is being done, ask the child why these feelings develop
- Have a discussion on how he/she deals with those feelings.

### Outcome

- You will get an understanding into how the child feels and whether he/she has some support system to look after him/herself when feeling sad or angry
- It may bring up issues that could be addressed later on to help the child develop an understanding on how to deal with different emotions.

<b>Which mood</b>
-------------------

### Material

Cards with various emotions.

### Aim

To understand what emotions are influencing them right now.

### Process

- Lay out all the cards on the ground
- Ask each child to pick up at least two cards, which reflect a change in how he/she is feeling (anger to calm, sadness to happiness, hate to love, frightened to security, listless to energetic, trapped to feeling free, lonely to being popular, patience to impatience)
- Make sure you demonstrate using one example for yourself
- Explore the following areas:
  - Which mood is dominating their life at present*
  - Does it affect their relationships or how they feel about themselves*
  - How do they cope with bad moods and feelings?*
  - What helps them to change from one mood to another?*

### Outcome

- They will share what makes them angry or sad or happy
- Some children will get an understanding into how to help feel better by listening to others
- This could be repeated at regular intervals to see how children are progressing and what is the current state of how they are feeling.



## What are you scared of?

### Material

Some examples which you might like to talk about like being scared (fear of mice, being followed, burglary, talking on the stage, exams, loud noises, darkness).

### Aim

Talk about what is scary for them.

### Process

- Ask them to think of one thing that they are really scared of, then let them talk about why and where they would run away
- Later, let them share what would help or helps them to cope
- It will help for all children to hear about fears other children have and to see it is normal to have fears. The children would be able to develop an understanding into how one can cope and overcome these fears.

### Outcome

- The child will be able to share his/her feelings of being scared
- This would help them to cope with their fears.

## Candle talk

### Material

Two candles.

### Aim

To help children, who have lost a family member, address their loss.

### Process

- Light up both candles
- Bring both candles together and say these lines:
  - Just like this candle we have people who come together. When we share our lives we become brighter and there is a lot of happiness.*
  - Even when one candle goes away (take one candle off and blow it out), a part of it goes on burning within the other candle.*
  - Just like the candle if people go away nothing and no one can take memories and good feelings we have about them away from us.*
  - We have to go on shining and burning bright.*



- This is symbolic for an older child who may not have fully accepted the loss of a loved one. The message is not to forget but to continue with life in spite of the loss.

**Outcome**

- Allows the child to ventilate about the loss
- The need to accept the loss by the child.

Group creation

**Material**

A big sheet of plain paper, colours and drawing material.

**Aim**

An activity-based group work to discover how children feel about certain issues.

**Process**

- You might have to stick four sheets together so that many children can use the same sheet at once
- Put one feeling right in the middle of the sheet and draw a boundary around that word – it could be fear, anger, happiness, sadness, illness
- Ask the group to think about that word and draw whatever comes to their mind around the word, wherever they would like.

**Outcome**

- There will be a group activity, but you will have a collective idea about how the children are feeling about that issue
- It is more action-based rather than about talking and so will work better with younger children.

The 'Bhaloo' inside

**Material**

Two pictures of teddy bear faces as shown in picture 12.

**Aim**

To help children understand that all of us feel bad emotions once in a while.

**Process**

- Build a story about a good-natured bear who at times is very angry and hurt within himself



- As he tries to talk he starts to shout
- When people go near him he hurts them
- State that he is this way because he is sad and upset
- Then ask the children:

*Do you feel like this sometimes too?*

*Why or when do you feel like this bear?*

*What or who makes you feel this way?*

### **Outcome**

- The children will understand what makes them angry or sad
- The child will learn that he/she is not alone with feelings of anger or sadness.

### **How are you today?**

### **Material**

Pre-drawn faces expressing various emotions as given in pictures 1–9.

### **Aim**

To get a quick look at how the children are feeling that day.

### **Process**

- Put out all the faces on the floor in different parts of the room
- Ask each child to go and stand next to the face they are feeling like today
- A quick round of why they are feeling should wrap up this session.

### **Outcome**

- This could be used daily to know how the children are and it could be a monitoring tool to identify a child who may always be feeling very angry or someone who constantly feels sad every day
- These issues could then be addressed through the activities.

### **Best memory picture**

### **Material**

Drawing material.

### **Aim**

To help the child talk about the person he/she has lost.



**Process**

- Ask the child which is the best memory he/she has of the person or object that he/she has lost
- Talk about how you could create the memory pictorially and then do it with the child
- Discuss using the following guidelines:  
*Why is this the best memory?*  
*What else does it make you think of?*
- Reinforce that even when there is a loss, we have happy memories and we can think of all the good things about the person or object we have lost.

**Outcome**

- Allows the child to talk about the loss
- Reinforces a happy memory even in the loss.

**D** DETAILS OF THE ACTIVITIES FOR SELF-ESTEEM

Whom can I trust
------------------

**Material**

Concentric circles drawn on large sheets of paper as given in picture 13.

**Aim**

To discover the support system the child has and find out some unmet needs.

**Process**

- Give them the sheet and take one for yourself
- Tell them we are going to do some activity together
- Ask them to draw a figure of themselves right in the middle of the innermost circle
- After that tell them in the first circle around the figure to write the names of the people they feel very close to – it could be his/her teacher, mother, friend, relative or pet. These are the people they can talk about anything and at anytime
- Then in the next circle they should write names of the people they are little less close to – people they talk to sometimes and in the outermost circle people they are least close to and hardly talk to. For younger children just have people he/she is close or not close to so that it is easier
- Later have a round of sharing



- Do not ask any questions about why they have chosen to put people in a particular circle; just let them share
- Keep these observations in mind and then you could explore some more later.

### Outcome

- Children in grief, need more reassurance and love and understanding
- The child needs to know that adults around can understand and support her/him through this
- You as an adult can see how to reinforce the positive circle the child has or help the child create a supportive circle if they do not have one
- You can repeat the exercise to see how the circles have been revised as time goes by.

### Getting to know you. . .

### Material

The group can choose any incomplete sentence for instance – I like..., My mother... (or any relevant family relations), This is what happened..., It seems difficult..., In school..., I cry..., I fear..., I do not like..., I am happy when..., I am sad when...

### Aim

Just to get the children to talk about themselves.

### Process

- The group is divided into pairs
- Each child gets a chance to think and complete the sentence and share it with his/her partner
- Each child then presents what his/her partner said to the larger group.

### Outcome

- It helps each child to be able to talk in the larger group
- Children start to feel comfortable within the group.

### My family drawing

### Material

Separate cards to draw on, pencils for drawing.

### Aim

To get an idea about the child's family members and how he feel about them.



## Process

- Start with each one introducing him/herself
- Then request each one of them to draw on the cards all their family members assuming that you cannot visit their respective families
- It is most likely that they will state that they find it difficult or that they do not know how to draw their family members. You could suggest that they draw simple stick figures depicting three emotions as shown in picture 14
- Then explain as to why that particular member feels angry so that when the child tries to share his/her anger, he/she feels comfortable
- As the children share their view about family members, note down the key points on the same sheet so that you have a record of what they have shared.

## Outcome

- It's a great way to start off the process of rapport formation. It gives a good insight into whom the child is close to, as you will see from the field examples given later on
- It can be used for contacting family when their support is required.

<b>Feel-good worksheets</b>
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## Material

Any worksheet given in pictures 15–22.

## Aim

To give a visual activity to help the child identify and work on the qualities they possess and to make them feel good and positive about themselves.

## Process

- Choose the theme you would like to work with
- Think through what sort of points you would like to highlight to the group and keep those in mind before the session
- Give out the worksheet
- Include a discussion before or after the worksheet is done
- Make the activity fun by allowing them to colour and talk about his/her work:
  - ❖ On the worksheet with a tree (picture 15) get the children to write some good traits on different branches. Then get them to use blue to colour the branches, which show the traits they have and red to colour the branches that has traits they would like to develop.



- ❖ On the worksheet with a clown (picture 16), get the children to write nice things about themselves in the balloons and colour them. You could also ask them to list on the balloons the good deeds they have done for others, which made them, feel good. More options could be chosen for this worksheet
- ❖ In the worksheet with the road (picture 17) on the hill, write a goal in the flag at the top of the hill like good classroom behaviour. Get the children to contribute different goals and add your own inputs. Then get the children to fill up the milestones with good traits needed to reach the goal. Other options could be the road to good studies or Good friends or Happiness at home or Happiness within or Overcoming my fears could be anything that the children need to work on
- ❖ The worksheet with a heart surrounded with small circles (picture 18) can be used to ask the children to write in the circles what others do to make them feel loved
- ❖ In the worksheet with the bulb (picture 19) the children can be asked to write one or two good qualities that they possess in the bulb. These could be – kindness, being a good friend, obedience, helpful at home and so on
- ❖ In (picture 22) each square represents the emotions of anger, happiness, sadness and worry. Ask the children to write in each of the boxes what makes them feel that emotion.
- ❖ Picture 20 has a stick figure in the middle and four boxes around. Get the children to write nice things about themselves in these boxes. This will teach them to love themselves
- ❖ In the worksheet with a star (picture 21) get the children to colour and decorate it and give it to themselves for something good that he/she has done or a good quality possessed.

### Safety hand

#### **Material**

Drawing material.

#### **Aim**

To get the children to identify people whom they can talk with and feel better.

#### **Process**

Ask children to draw an outline of their hands

Ask them to think of at least five people at home or school whom they can talk to and approach for help. They should write the names down on this drawing.

#### **Outcome**

It instills a feeling of security and makes feel good and secure.



## **D** DETAILS OF ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPING UNDERSTANDING

### Question box/bag

#### Material

Take a polythene bag or a cardboard box and with the children decorate it a bit to make it look friendly.

#### Aim

To address the worries that children may have in their minds and do not know whom to ask for help.

#### Process

- Tell the children we are going to set up a worry box or bag
- Explain that often many questions and thoughts come up in our mind and we do not know whom to ask. So this is one way that we can look at some of those questions, thoughts or feelings
- Let them know that the bag or box is for any thought, feeling or emotion that is causing concern to them
- You can offer two options:
  - ❖ *Tell them not to put down their name if they do not want to*
  - ❖ *If you want a one-to-one interaction about an issue then mark the slip and meet the child separately.*
- Set a time, maybe within a week or ten days, whatever the case maybe, of when you will be emptying the box and sharing the issues
- This can be set up in the school/home or with the *Amanpathik* who can work with a small group of children in one locality
- Afford confidentiality as well as the space for one to one interaction if they wish
- You must remember to answer in a way that is age appropriate and removes the misconceptions, fears and fantasies of the child. If you do not have answers, be honest and say you do not know and that there is no one way because different people have different views and ideas.

#### Outcome

- A good way to address a lot of the issues that could be causing a lot of fear and concern to the children



- It would also help them fill in the gaps in the information the children already have and remove their misconceptions
- Provides a concrete channel for the children to share their feelings and concerns.

### Opposing emotions

#### **Aim**

To think about how they have felt being in absolutely opposite emotions.

#### **Process**

Think of any two opposing emotions and compare how they have felt. For instance, think of a time when they have been really kind and compare it with one incident when they have been really mean and angry or rude. Ask them how they felt at both times. You could use the following pairs:

- Love & jealousy
- Happiness & sadness
- Being silly & serious
- Like & dislike
- Courage & fear
- Self-sacrifice & selfishness.

#### **Outcome**

A good way to address absolutely opposite emotions.

### Happy memories

#### **Material**

Drawing material.

#### **Aim**

Understanding that there is a need to move on after a loss or some traumatic event.

#### **Process**

- Ask the group to think about something or someone that they were fond of but have lost
- Then once everyone has had time to think, ask them to talk about what happened that particular day of loss
- Ask them to say goodbye to that object or person by drawing something for that object or person



- Tell them that the happy memories that they drew earlier on will always be within them, but life has to go on.

### Outcome

Develops an understanding of how to move on after a loss or some traumatic event.

<b>Story sessions</b>
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### Material

- ◆ Here one can use thematic pictures as given in pictures 23–33
- ◆ You can use animal figures as given in the kit
- ◆ You can use family figures provided in the kit.

### Aim

Get the children to talk or think about an issue of concern to them.

### Process

- Either invite the child to choose any picture and tell a story, or you could start and then they reciprocate
- Keep your story short and simple with maybe one key point that you are trying to make
- Ask them to reflect upon what happened to the character in the story and then ask them to tell you whether anyone of them have faced similar situations.

#### *Themes that should be touched here are:*

- ❖ *Nightmares (Picture-31)*
- ❖ *Loneliness (Picture-24)*
- ❖ *Loss of loved one (Picture-25)*
- ❖ *Disinterest in life (Picture-30)*
- ❖ *Sadness (Picture-32)*
- ❖ *Fear (Picture-26)*
- ❖ *Happiness (Picture-27)*
- ❖ *Coping with changes like shifting of schools or homes (Picture-23)*
- ❖ *Making friends (Picture-29)*
- ❖ *Being or feeling different (Picture-30).*

### Outcome

Provides an understanding about the issues concerning the child.



## What would you do?

### Material

Cards with various situations. For example:

- ◆ You are a 5-year-old and lost in the market place. What do you feel?
- ◆ You had to leave your hometown suddenly without saying goodbye to your friends. How would you feel?
- ◆ You are to become captain of your cricket team, but fall and break your leg. What would you do?
- ◆ You wanted to do the lead role in the play, but someone else got it. How would you feel?
- ◆ A person tells a lie about you and gets you into trouble in school. How do you feel?

### Aim

Enable children to understand that it is normal to feel various emotions.

### Process

- Ask them to think about how if in their life they have felt like the lost five-year old boy?
- Reinforce that like riots, other situations too elicit similar feelings like fear sadness and anger
- In earlier situations they have been able to cope and come out of it and so even now they will be able to overcome all these feelings soon
- Then have a set of feeling cards per child. Say for 6 kids have six happy, six sad feelings, six fear cards and six anger cards
- Give one set of cards to each child
- Ask the children to pick the card that represents the feelings that were topmost during the recent events
- Then talk about how they are feeling now
- This gives the child an opportunity to own and mark out the feeling and see how they have moved on since the event.

### Outcome

Enables the child to understand that it is normal to feel various emotions.



## Lifelines

### Material

Drawing material.

### Aim

Understand that life experiences add to us and then we move ahead. We experience both negative and positive life events.

### Process

- Mark out on a sheet their ages from birth till date as shown in picture 36
- Add to each year any special events and memories that they remember. They can add on special people too like, maybe, the year their sister was born. Some may not clearly remember year-wise, but it is okay. This is just a rough chart to help them put things down
- They would include times when they have had a loss like their grandmother's death
- Talk about how they felt, both during the negative events and the positive events
- Reinforce the fact that just as we move from one event to another in life, so also we will be able to move beyond the riots, no matter how difficult it may seem now.

### Outcome

Makes the child to understand that we experience both negative and positive life events.

## Learning new things

### Material

Copies of the flowers given in pictures 34–35.

### Aim

Help the children learn and think about different issues.

### Process

- Pick one issue say 'Caring for others'
- Give them small cards with various statements, some speaking of the right things and others the wrong ones
- Ask the children to write out which ones go for the happy flower and which ones go to the sad flower. The happy flower shows the right things and the sad flower the wrong ones



- Add each child to say one good thing they already have and one bad quality that they would like to change. This would personalise the learning for them without you having to advise or teach them directly
- For instance a flower exercise on 'Playing with friends' would contain statements like:
  - Enjoys playing with others*
  - Leaves other children's things alone*
  - Waits for turn to speak*
  - Takes turns to play*
  - Breaks other people's items*
  - Gets angry when does not win*
  - Wants to be first while playing*
  - Fights with others*
  - Give everyone a chance*
  - Does not disturb others.*
- Other themes to work upon are: Patience, friendship, love and care, good eating habits, classroom behaviour, etc.

**Outcome**

Helps the children to learn and think about different issues.

My time

**Material**

2 pictures of a clock.

**Aim**

Making proper use of their time.

**Process**

- For Clock One write out things you have done today that have been good use of your time
- For Clock Two write things you have done that have been waste of time
- Finish with a discussion on good healthy living, which includes time for prayers, play, study, family time, etc. Ask them to include on their clock
- This exercise can be used to monitor how the child is his/her spending time.

**Outcome**

Enables the children to make proper use of their time.



## **A**CTIVITIES FOR POSITIVE ENDINGS TO SESSIONS

Often when you have discussions about loss or what scares them, fear is a crucial factor for the children. So before they leave a session they should feel comfortable and happy. All sessions should end on a happy note through light games or fun drawing or some free clay work. The following activities can be used for positive endings.

### **Mirror game**

Divide the group into pairs and then one person becomes the leader and the other is the mirror. They get two minutes wherein the person makes movements with his or her hands and upper torso and the mirror has to copy the movements. After two minutes they change roles and repeat the process.

### **Make name tags**

The group is given a cut-out of some shape and they spend time writing their name on their tags and decorating it beautifully. Then they present it to themselves. The group goes around looking at each other's tags and they can only appreciate, not make fun of any tag.

### **Paper cutting**

Take bits of coloured paper and stick it as they want on a plain sheet of paper. The colours need to be really bright and the process is fun.

### **Blind car**

Group is divided into pairs

Then one person takes the role of being a car and the other the driver

The car has to close his or her eyes and the driver stands behind and guides the car across the area.

Instructions to move around are as follows when the driver,

Press the right shoulder = car turns right

Press the left shoulder = car turns left

Press both the shoulders = car stops

Push a little with both hands = car starts

Then after two minutes roles are reversed.



### **Arm link**

The facilitator calls out a number and the children quickly have to link up their arms according to that number. The children who cannot find a place are eliminated.

### **Dream person/object**

They have to think up and talk about their dream person or object. Say, for instance, they have chosen siblings, then they can talk about how they play together, talk to each other, fight, the elder brother protects him, etc .

### **Pass the mask**

The group sits in a circle. One person starts by making a face at the person sitting right beside him/her. That person immitates the face that has been made and shows it to the child sitting next. This continues till all the children have got achance to make the face.

### **Zoom and brake**

The group sits in a circle. One person starts by looking at the partner next to him and says, 'zoom'. The person then turns to the next persons and passes it saying 'zoom'. This has to be done in one direction till someone says, 'brake' and then the direction of 'zoom' gets reversed. This has to be done very fast to be fun.

### **Electric squeeze**

All the children sit in a circle and then hold hands. One person starts the 'electric squeeze'. Each person leaves the room after getting the squeeze, which signifies friendship and belongingness.

### **Pass the smile**

All the children sit in a circle and then each one turns his/her head and looks into the next person's eyes and passes on a big smile. The smile goes around the circle before the session ends for the day.

### **Mime an act**

The group is divided into two teams. Each team calls a member of the other team and gives him an action to mime, which, if guessed correctly by the teammates, wins their team a point.



### **Places**

On a board put up words like garden, bedroom, kitchen, hall, bathroom, playground, classroom, gate and then children have to take one or two words and write or talk about events related to such places. Why did they choose this place? Do they feel more comfortable? What sorts of memories are associated with such places? – these are some of the aspects that can be talked about.

### **Describe your hands**

Each child can spend time thinking about his/her hands and then describe what sort of hands they have (overall type of skin, lines on it and major marks, injuries). They could discuss how hands feel when they are idle, the kind of things hands do, what they think or feel about their hands, what they would like to tell their hands. This could be repeated on another day for some other body part like face, legs, head, the whole body.

### **Being something else**

Take an insect or animal and then ask the children to talk about a day in that animal's life. Ask them why they chose that animal what they like and dislike about it. Then ask them, which animal they would most like to be and why.

### **Water and ice**

There is one child who is the den. The other child try to run away from him, if the den touches any child, the child freezes till someone else can run and de-freeze the child.

### **Frozen lion**

Everybody has to stand still, except for one who is the lion. He/she moves round and if he finds someone shaking, that person becomes the lion.

### **Fruit basket**

The group gets divided into 3 types of fruits by drawing circles with 1 being apples, 2 being bananas and 3 being oranges. Then when the facilitator calls out oranges, all the oranges exchange places; when he says apples all the apples rush to exchange places. But when he says 'fruit basket' all the fruits rush around and change places.



### Animals calling

The Children are divided into groups of dogs, cats, goats and pigs by calling out 1 to 4. Then all the Children have to close their eyes and make the sound of that particular animal and then form their groups.

### Snake catcher

Children stand behind each other to make a long snake. One child is a catcher and he/she tries to catch the tail of the snake and the snake has to move fast to escape. If it is caught, then the head of the snake becomes the catcher, and the catcher becomes the tail.

## MATERIAL REQUIRED FOR A PLAY KIT

Different things need to be included in a play kit. You can add more, but the basic ones and how they can be used are given below:

<b>Family of dogs:</b> to use in stories to play out family scenes symbolically
<b>A baby doll with a milk bottle:</b> play out caring relationships
<b>A box of miniature plastic animals:</b> show interactions and develop understanding
<b>A set of skittles or a hit-me doll:</b> take out their anger
<b>A few cars:</b> play out real life scenes
<b>Plasticine or moulding clay:</b> creative work and expressions
<b>Picture cards for story telling:</b> develops understanding
<b>Toy guns:</b> expressions
<b>Drawing material</b> (Poster paints and brushes, paper, crayons, pencils, sharpeners, erasers): expressions and creative work
<b>Glue, scissors, coloured paper:</b> creative work
<b>Kitchen utensils:</b> play out real life situations
<b>Doctor set:</b> expressions and to care for someone



Picture - 1

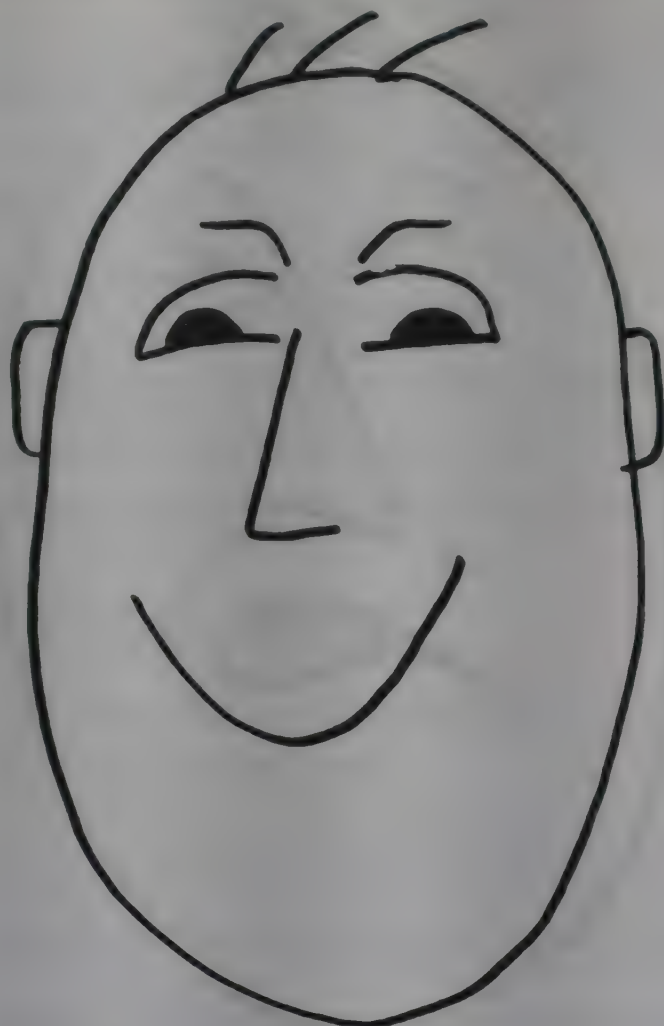


Picture - 2





Picture - 3



Picture - 4





Picture - 5



Picture - 6





Picture - 7



Picture - 8

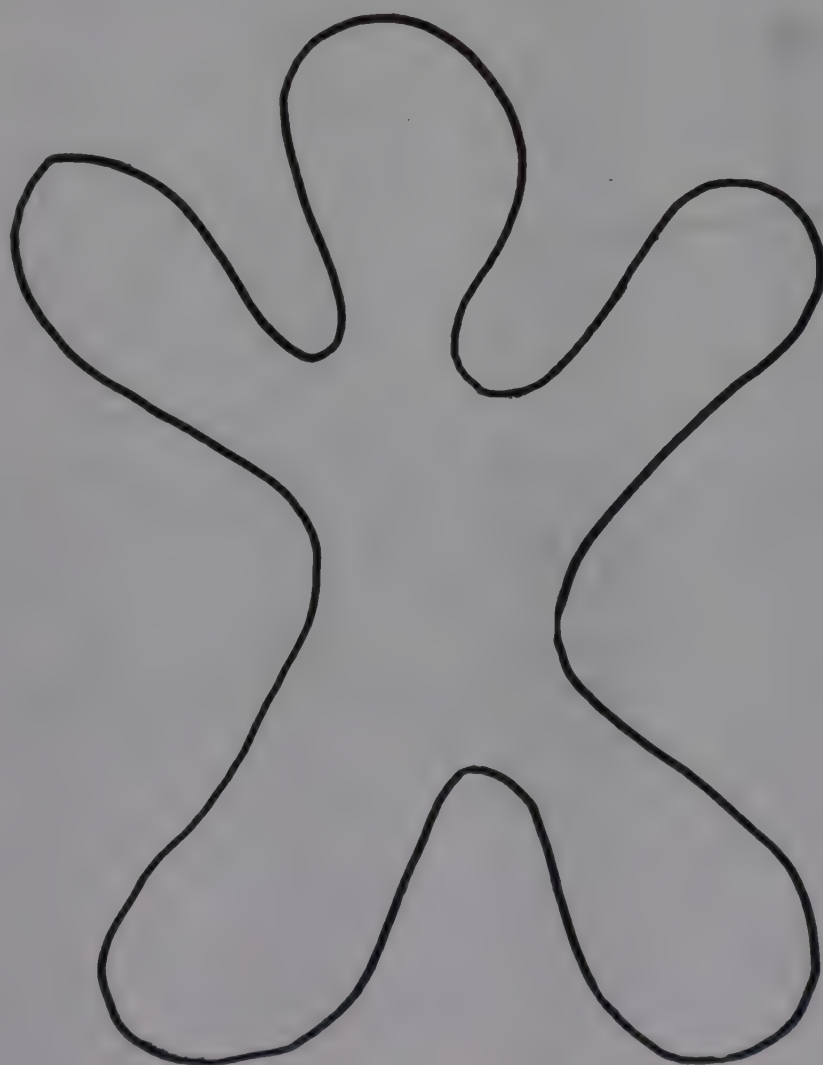




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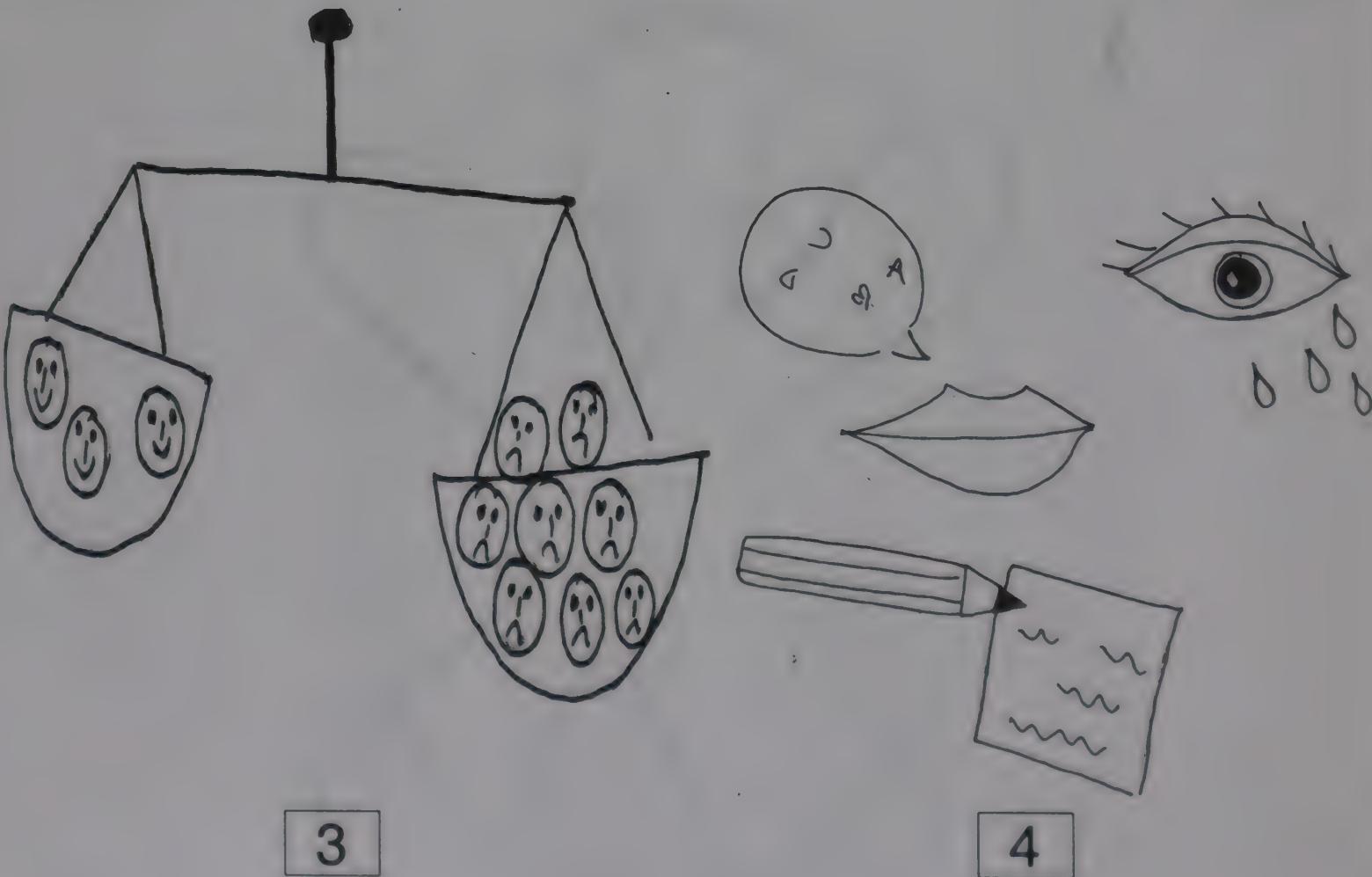
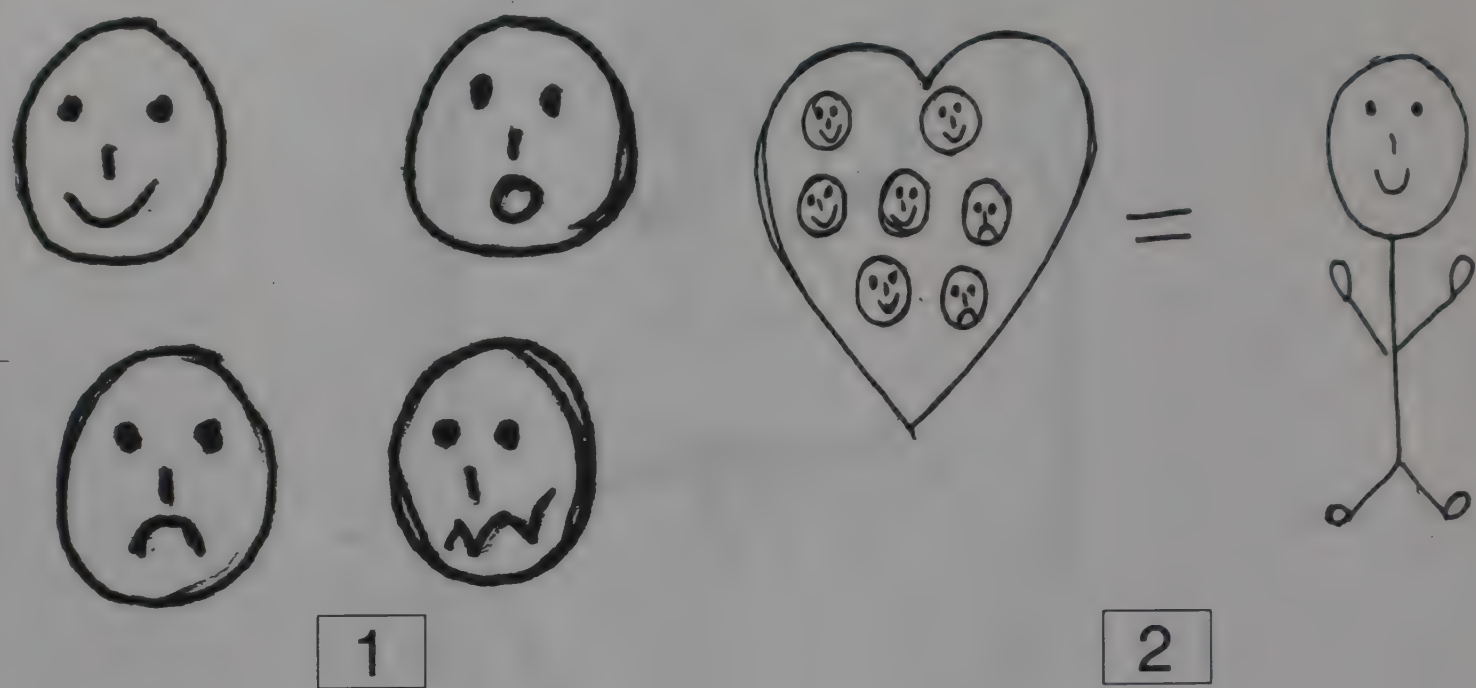


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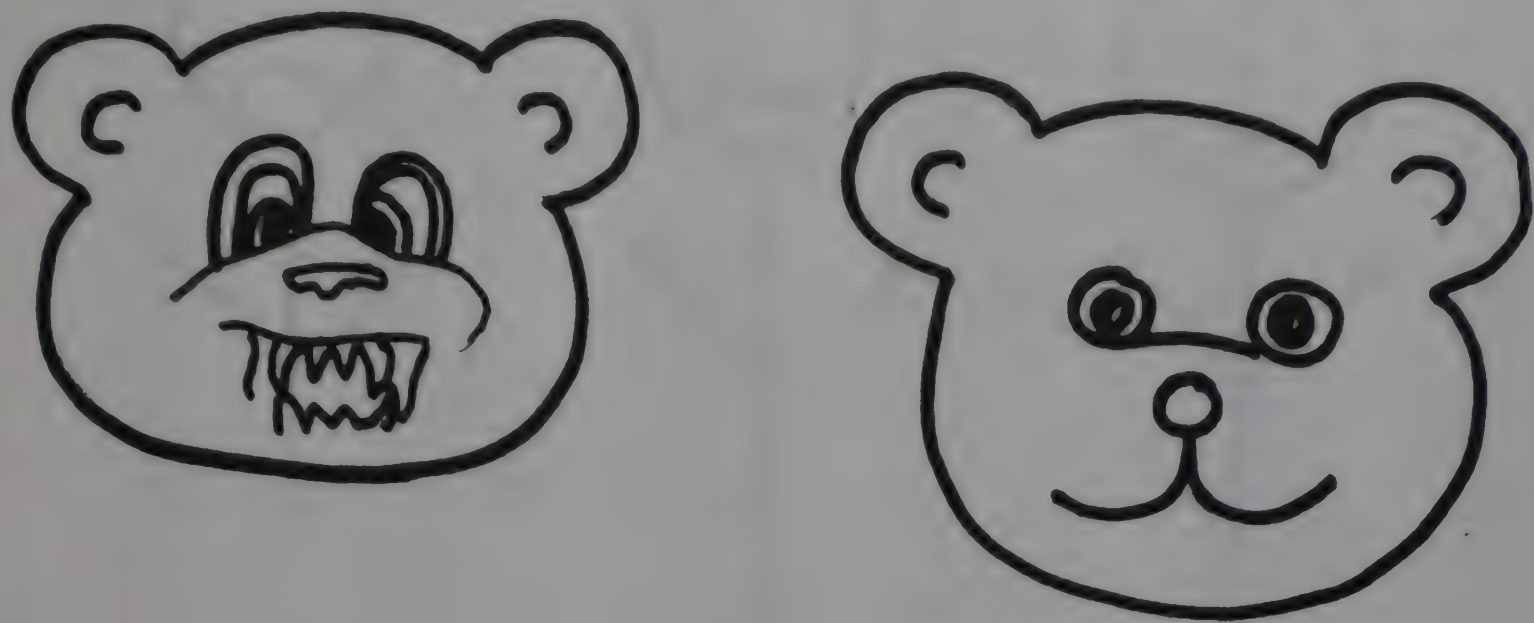


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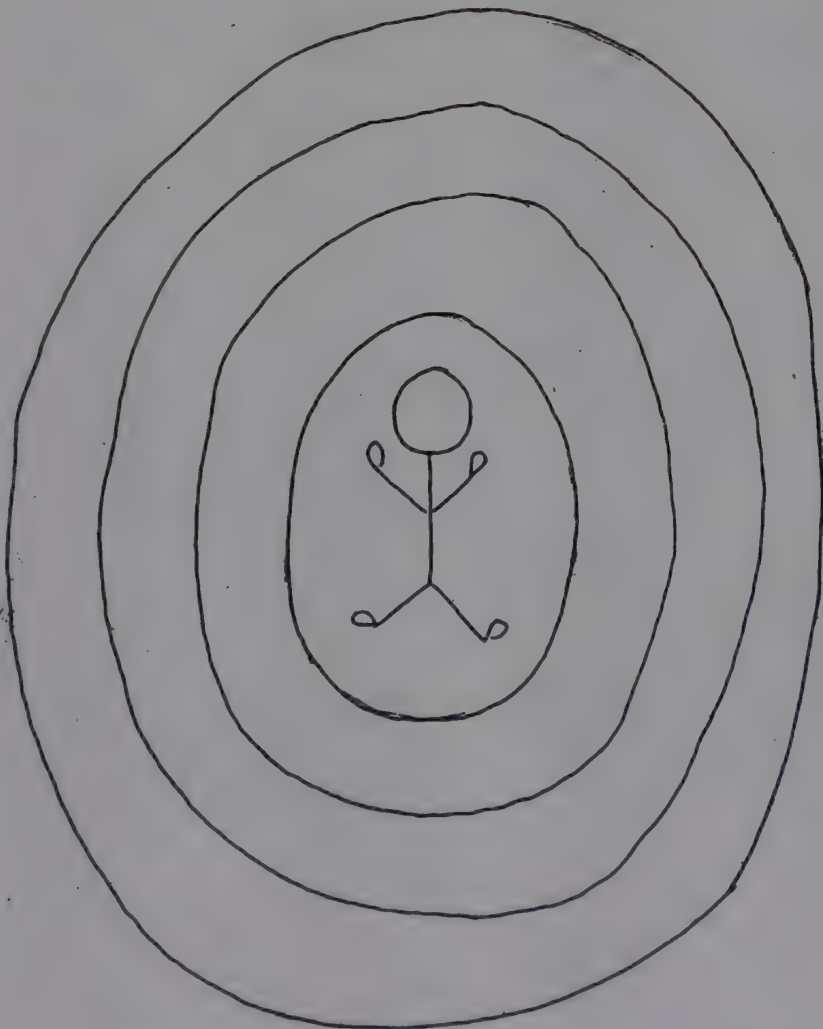




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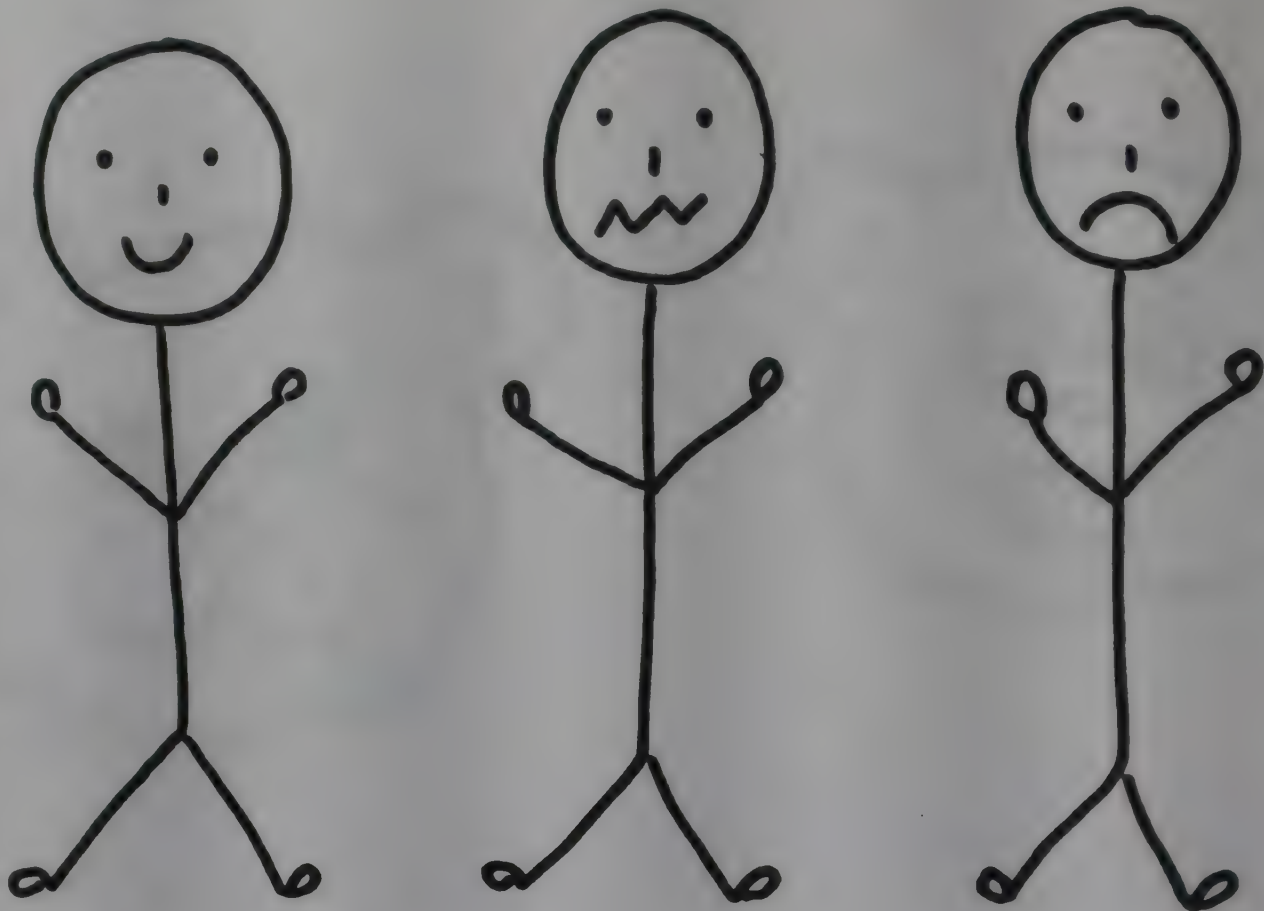


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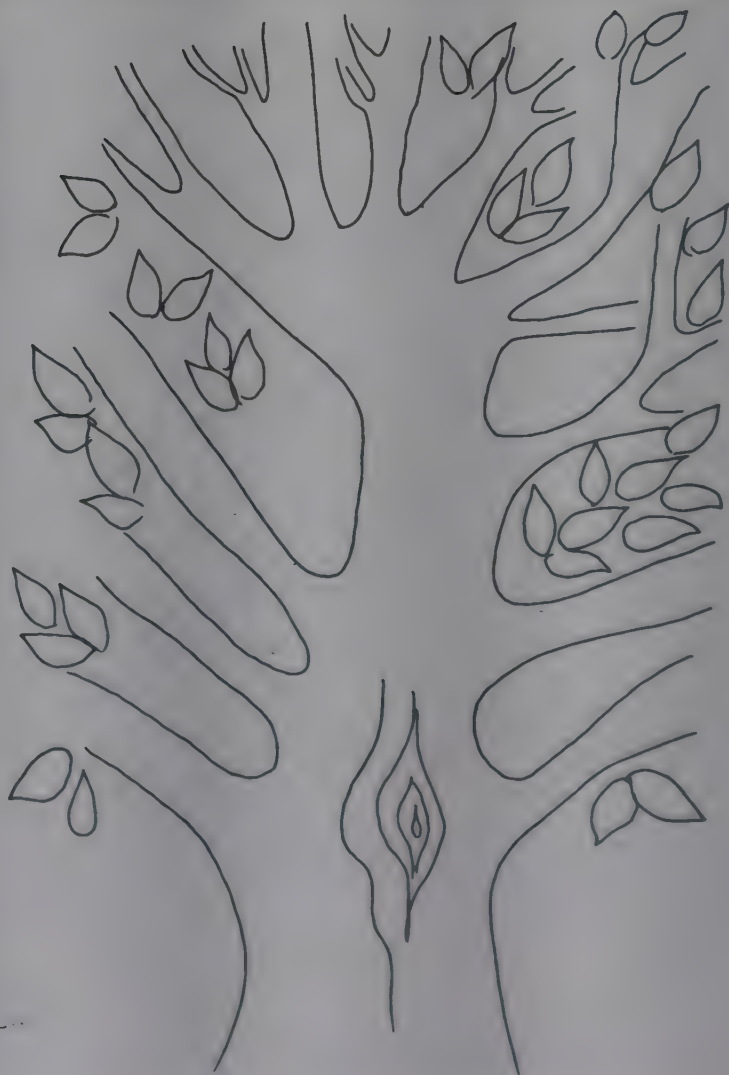




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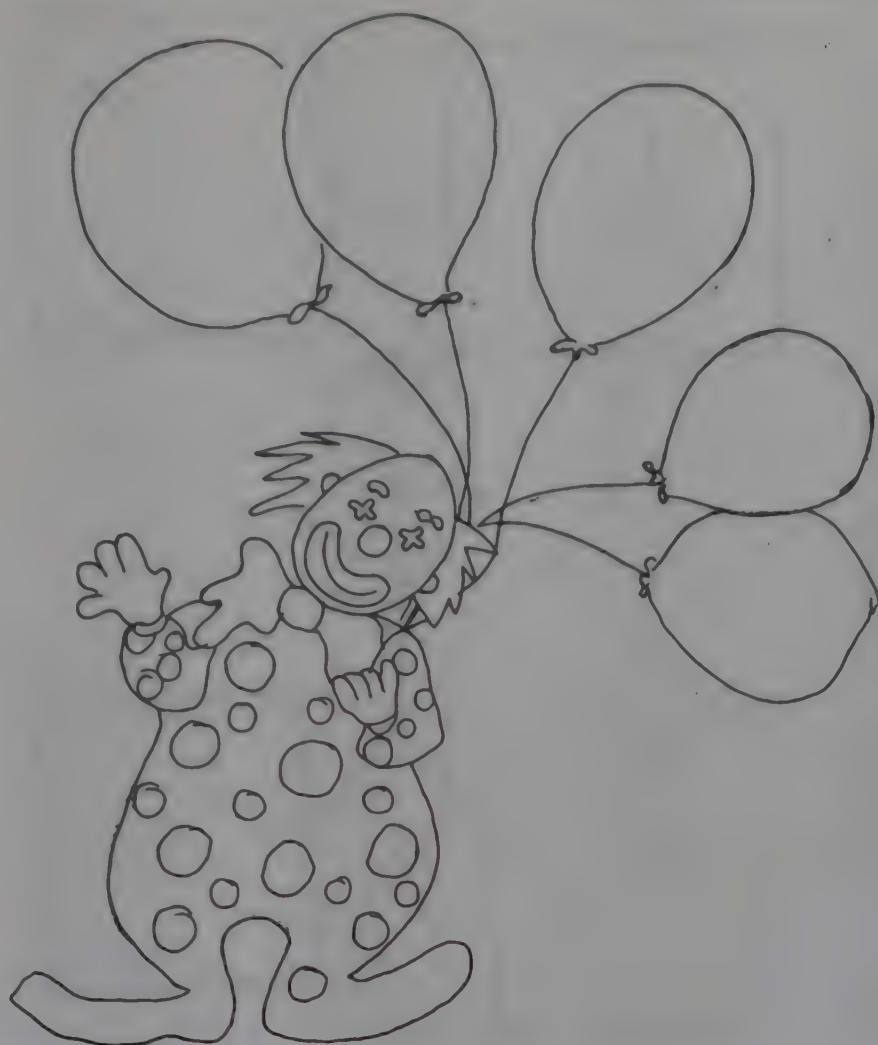


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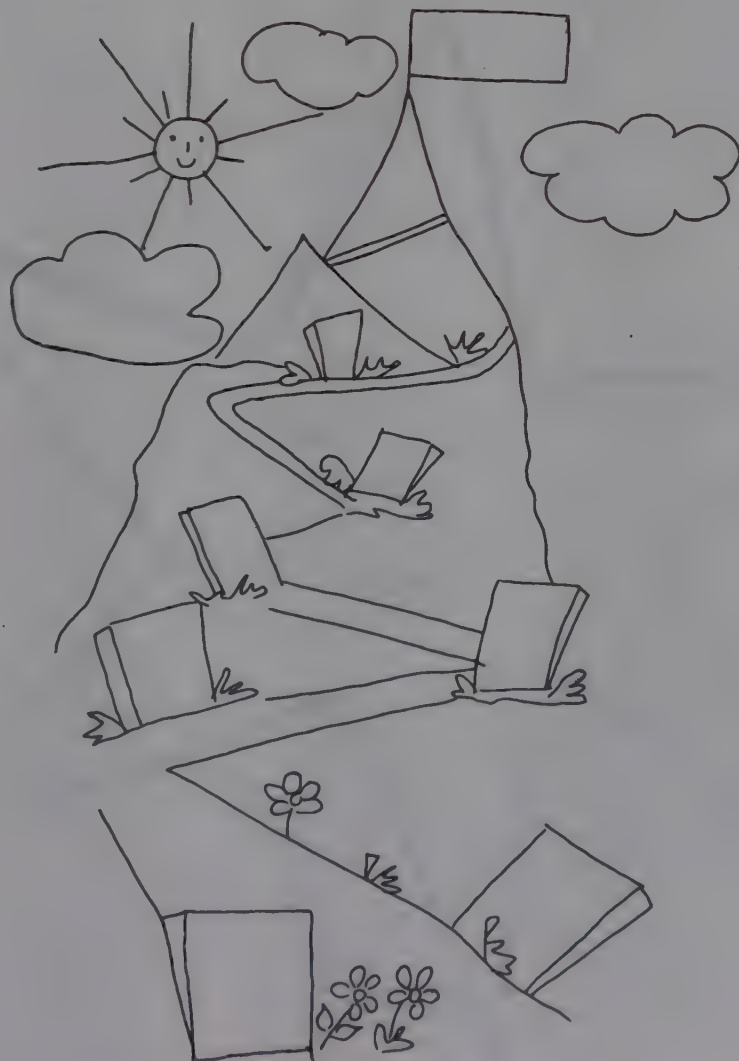




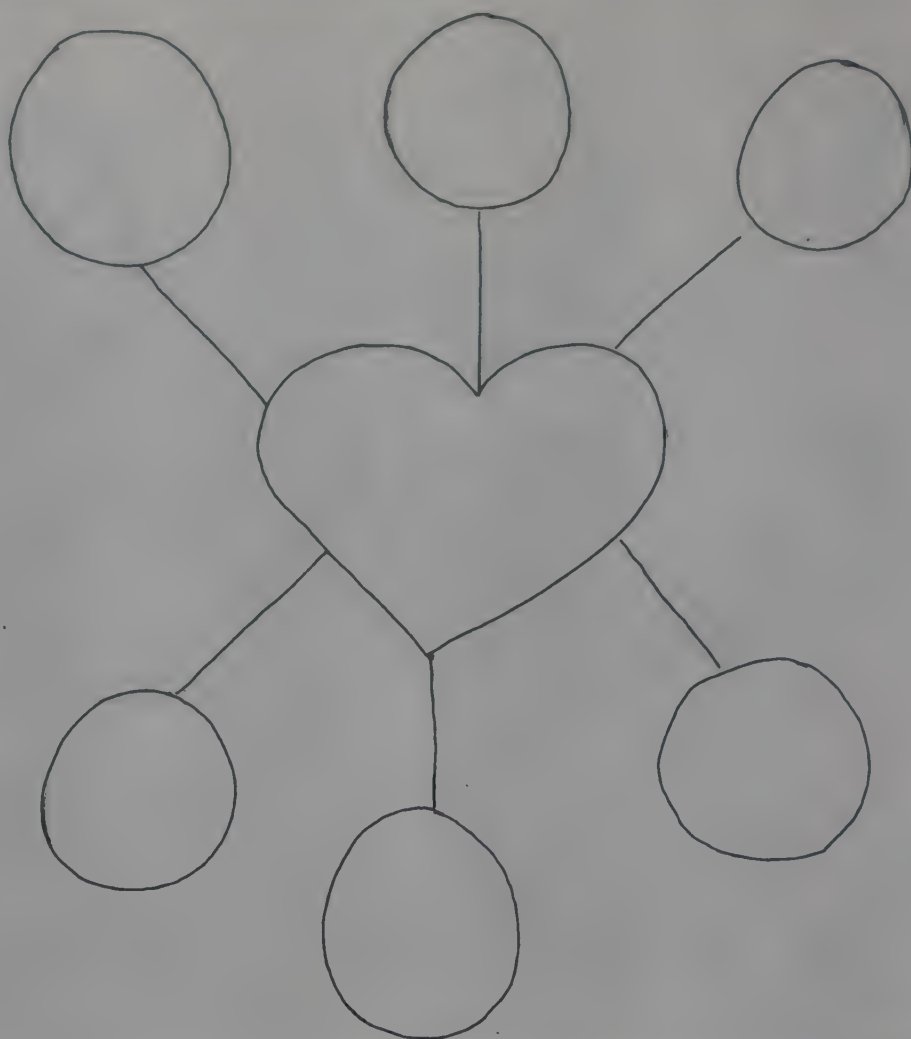
Picture - 16



Picture - 17



Picture - 18

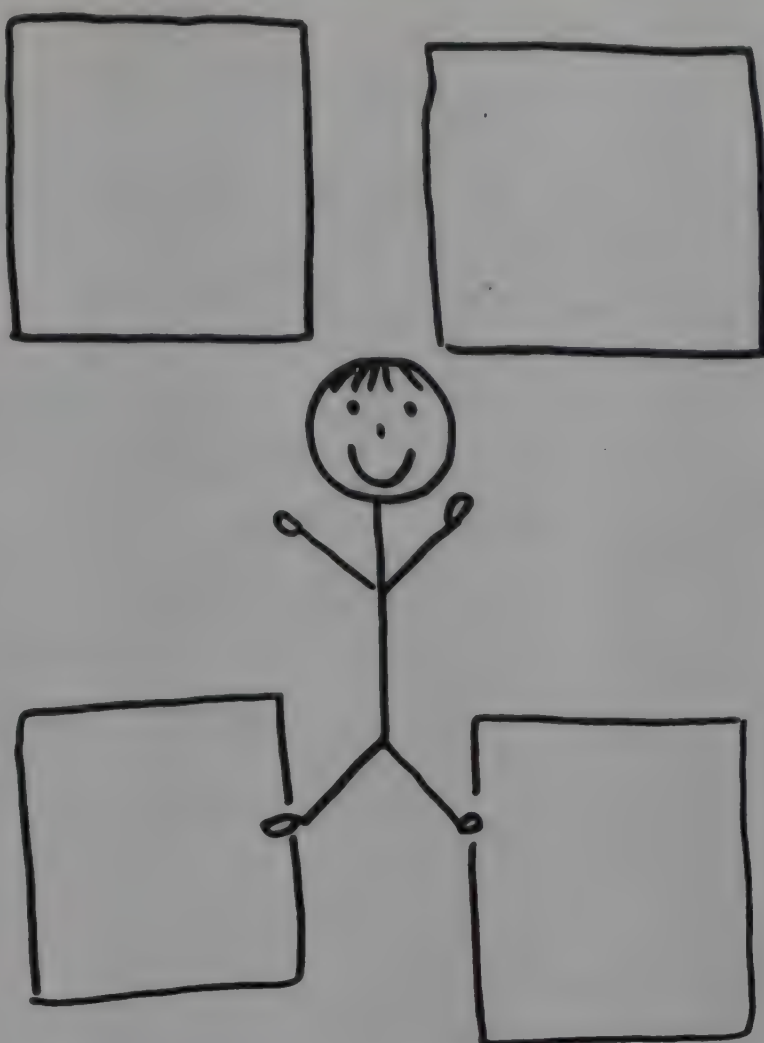


Picture - 19





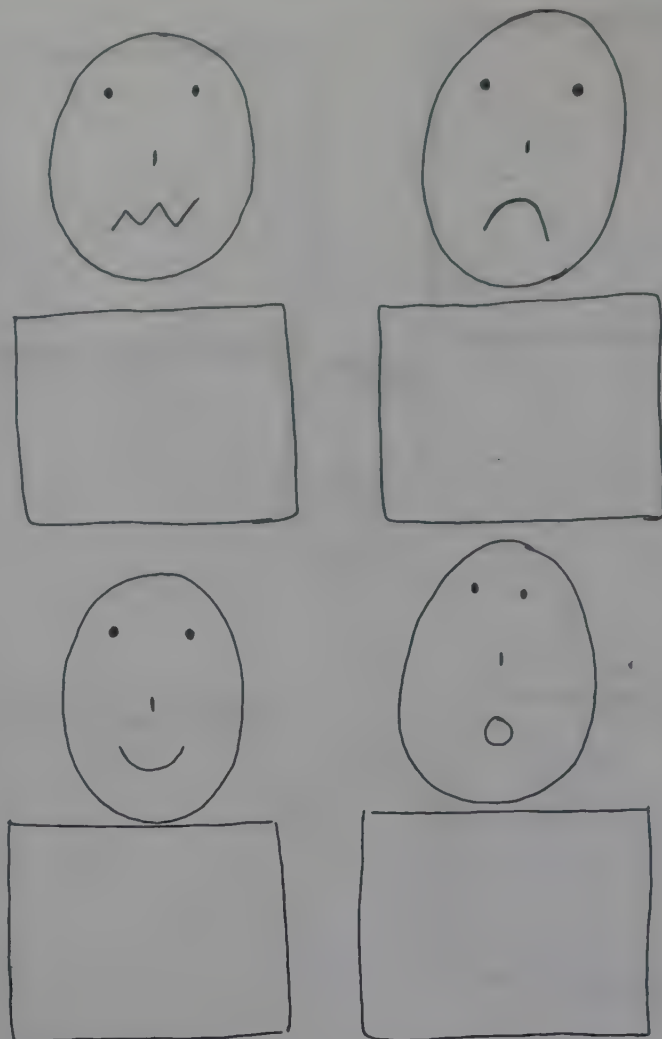
Picture - 20



Picture - 21



Picture - 22



Picture - 23





Picture - 24



Picture - 25



Picture - 26



Picture - 27





Picture - 28



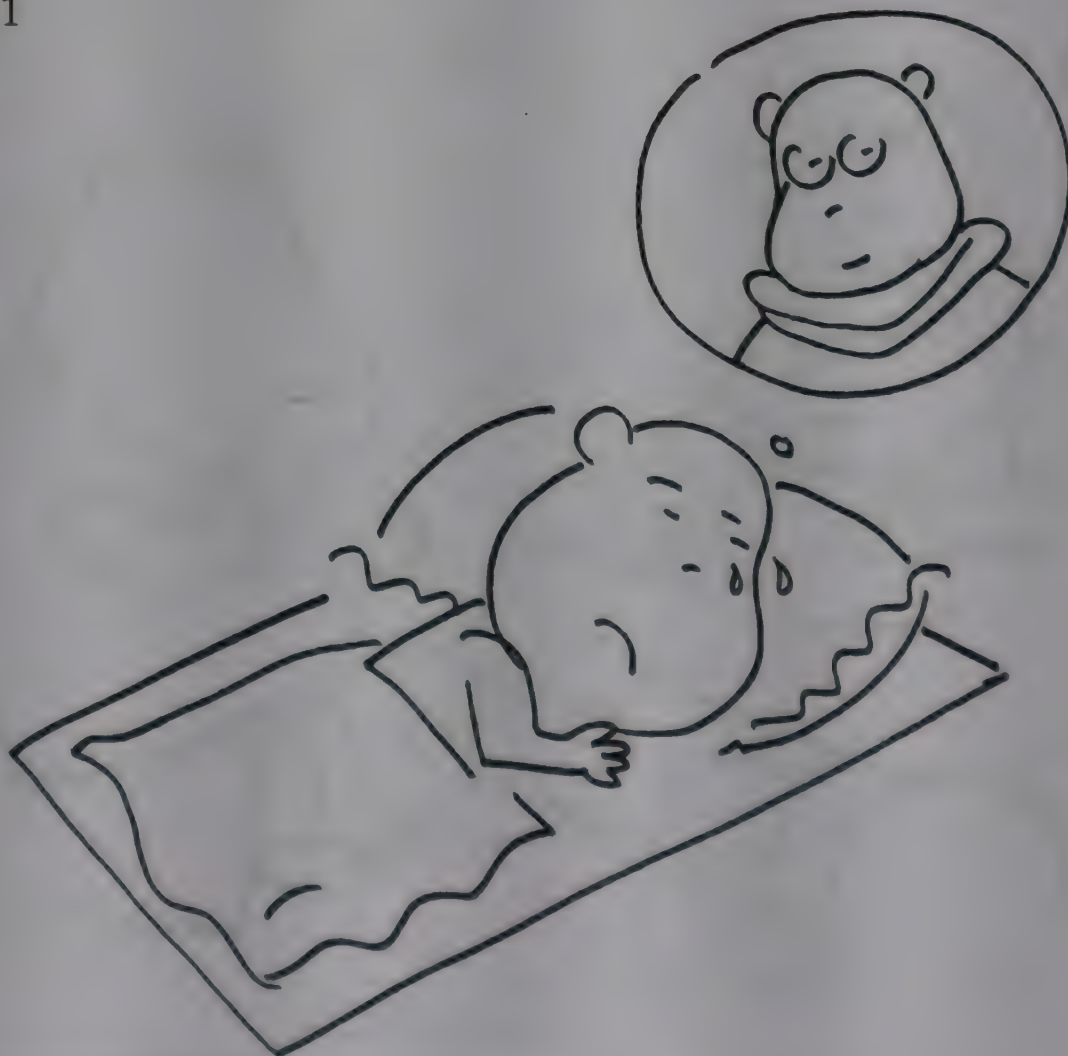
Picture - 29



Picture - 30



Picture - 31





Picture - 32



Picture - 33



Picture - 34

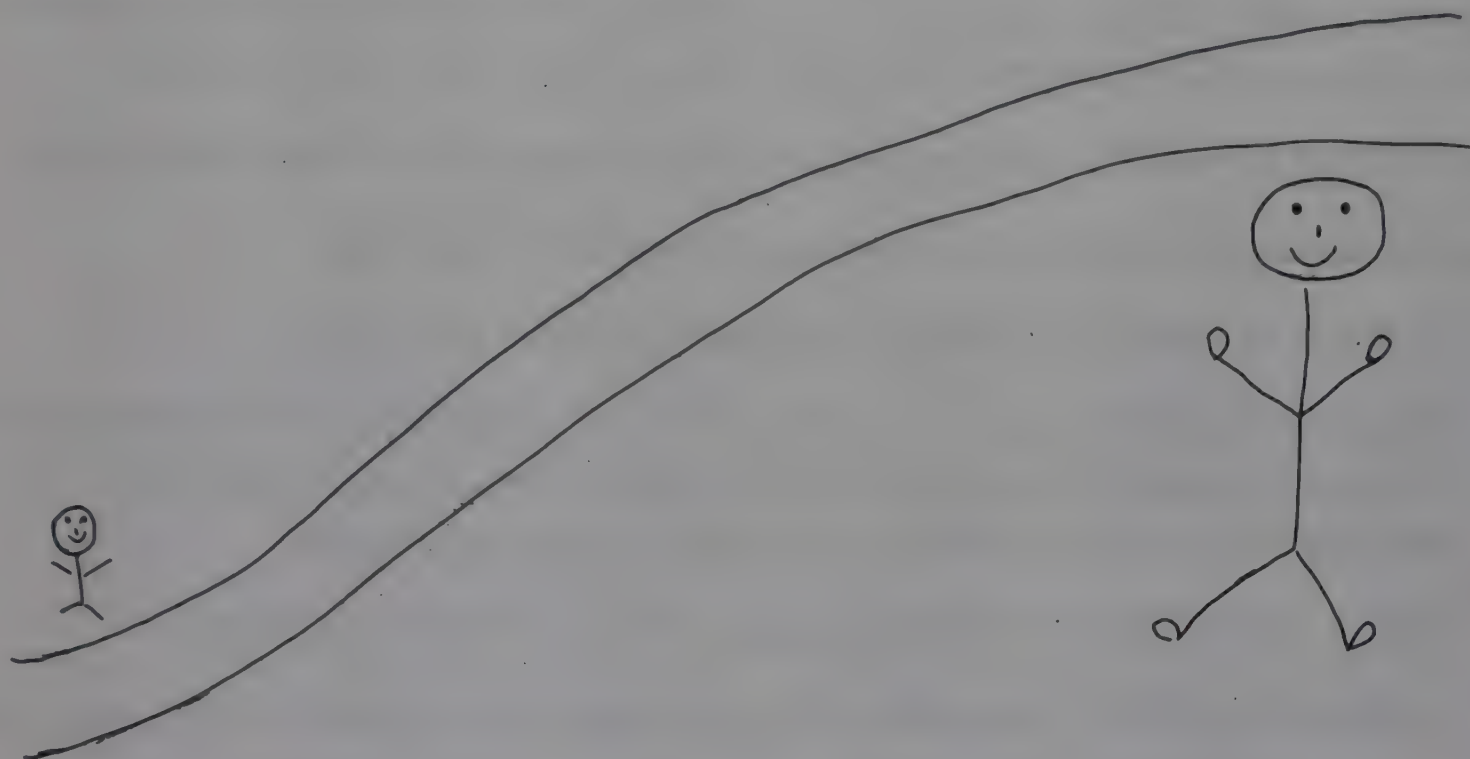


Picture - 35





Picture - 36



# SOURCE MATERIAL

## Examples of children

The case illustrations have been taken from three sources:

Field experiences of the Amansamudaya psychosocial team (cases marked\*are direct field experiences) over the last 6 months

Panjabi et al 2002, *The Next Generation: In The Wake of Genocide, a report on the impact of the Gujarat Pogrom on Children and the Young* (cases marked\*\*are from this report)

Outlook (May 13<sup>th</sup> 2002 issue) pages 50–55. (cases marked\*\*\*are from this article)

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## A m a n   P a t h i k s

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Yousuf Bai Mansoori, Zakir S Kazi



## WHAT WE KNOW...

- ◆ Intense emotional reactions in the face of these events are expected and normal.
- ◆ There is a trajectory of responses over time most often starting early and subsiding within weeks and months. But for some people, the onset of responses may be delayed. In others, the reactions may become long-term leading to considerable disability.
- ◆ Responses will be highly individual in nature, often quite intense and sometimes conflictual. The vast majority of reactions are in the normal range and the intensity will diminish for most people over time without the need for professional help. Support from family and friends is critical. For some, however, the degree of exposure may lead to more serious and prolonged reactions.
- ◆ The range of feelings experienced may be quite broad. People may describe intense feelings of sadness followed by anger. Others may experience fearfulness and hypervigilance to the environment among numerous other reactions.
- ◆ There may be temporary disruptions in normal coping mechanisms for many people and some may go on to develop problems with sleep, nightmares, concentration, intrusive thoughts and a preoccupation with reliving the events. These reactions are generally short lived but if they persist, professional consultation should be sought.

## WHAT CAN BE DONE?

- ◆ Create opportunities for people to talk and share experiences in supportive groups. This is often done best in familiar surroundings such as religious places, schools or community centers.
- ◆ Provide accurate and practical information especially concerning the larger recovery efforts. Special attention to the needs of relief applicants is necessary as relating to the rules and regulations of the relief organizations during the crisis can be overwhelming.
- ◆ Give particular consideration to the needs of special groups such as children, those who have been most intensely exposed or had a history of previous



events (exposure to trauma), rescue workers, and people with pre existing mental health conditions.

- ◆ Children and adolescents will need the support of their caregivers. This support should reflect accurate concerns, and diminish any words or actions that would increase the child or adolescent's anxiety. Caregivers should offer reassurance as to their presence and availability during this time. Exposure to television, movies or print matter that offers too graphic depictions of the destruction or victims should be limited.
- ◆ A percentage of people, as high as 30%, who experience the most direct exposure to the events may go on to develop more serious mental health concerns and should be referred for services if they develop persistent issues.

Overwhelming feelings are to be expected and can stress individuals, communities and nations. There are many actions that can be taken at the level of governments, international NGOs and local groups to appropriately and effectively support victims of such a catastrophe.

WHO, October 2001





INFORMATION MANUAL 3

# RIOTS

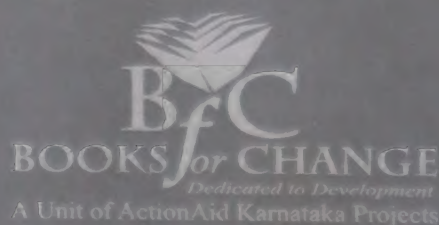
## PSYCHOSOCIAL CARE *for* CHILDREN

Disasters pose a monumental challenge to the total community. There has been a gradual acceptance of the need for psychosocial care. The recent Gujarat Riots have left behind a trail of anger, anguish, betrayal and emotional scars that pose an enormous challenge of normalising the children's feelings and activities.

The information booklet is unique because:

1. It addresses normalisation of emotional reactions.
2. It carries a large amount of relevant field experiences.
3. It is based on the actual work of over 200 Amanpathiks.
4. It is user friendly, based on field level pre-testing and community interviews.

It is a collaborative effort of professionals, voluntary agencies and survivors.



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